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SUMMER 1996

No. 14

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DISTRIBUTED BY
Central Books Ltd, 99 Wallis Road,
LONDON E3 5LH 0161 366 4654

PUBLISHED BY
The Green Party
1A Waterloo Road, LONDON N19 5NJ
Tel: 0171 272 4474
Fax: 0171 272 6653

ADVERTISING RATES
Classified
30p per word, minimum 20 words
Display £5.00 per single column cm
(columns 6cm width)
260x180mm £280
Full page 128x180mm £150
Half page 128x90mm £75
Quarter 64x90mm £40
Eighth 32x90mm £25
Sixteenth 16x90mm £12.50
For typesetting add 10% Send cheque
payable to 'Green Party' with order to:
JO CANE, 3 Railway Cottages,
Lindfield Rd, Ardingly, W. Sussex
RH17 6SN 01444 892762

Products and services advertised in
Green World are not endorsed by the
Green Party

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Green World is mailed free to all
national Green Party members.
Available to others by subscription
1 year (4 issues) £3.50

Send cheque/PO payable to
the Green Party to:
SUBSCRIPTIONS, 45 Broadway, Fulford
YORK YO1 4JP

BULK DISCOUNT RATES
Bulk quantities of Green World
at discount prices for resale from:
GREEN TRADE, 43 Green Street,
HEREFORD HR1 2QH 01432 264763

PRINTED BY
Post Haste Printers, Georges Place,
Georges Street, Pocklington,
York YO4 2DF 01759 303772

NEXT ISSUE
Copy deadline 15th July
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Green World ISSN 1359-110X
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Increasing numbers of people find themselves with an appalling dilemma; needing to earn an income to keep their heads above water by doing ecologically damaging and unsustainable jobs. The dilemma is getting worse.

April 1st saw the beginning of a phased introduction of the Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), to be implemented nationwide in October. As Greens we will be opposing the JSA on all counts.

For the JSA demands that within the first six months of unemployment you have to undertake any work offered to you, no matter how environmentally damaging, no matter where in the country, no matter how low paid or how bad the working conditions. If you don't - no benefit. You can even have your benefit stopped for having long hair or for signing on with a dog in tow!

There's no real opposition to the un-green principles behind the JSA from the other parties. Only the Green Party truly believes in giving people choice over the kind of work we do and giving us the right to say no to damaging our environment or communities.

The effects of the JSA will be felt by us all, not just those who are claiming. Communities will be harshly effected by rising crime when people have their benefits stopped. Facilities and communities will be disrupted when people have to relocate for work. The environment will suffer from increased commuting. Poverty will get even more widespread.

The Greens will be leading the radical campaign against JSA. Actions and leaflets have been planned and we will be taking our campaign out to the people effected. It won't just be a negative campaign; we will be pushing our proposals for the fair and ecologically sound Basic Income Scheme and for policies that enhance and support community cohesion.

Anyone who wants more information about the campaign should contact Chloe Wilson. Together, the Green movement, the unemployed, and all those who care about our environment and communities, will ensure that the path of the JSA is not smooth. And once again, the Green Party will be at the forefront, showing that there are real and credible alternatives - Green alternatives.



News and comment



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Greens target of anti-terrorist forces

by Peter Barnett

Both the police and MI5 have now decided environmental activists are potential terrorists, who can expect to experience the same kind of attention that the animal rights movement have had to contend with. The steady erosion of civil liberties and increased use of the police against dissent indicates an establishment seriously out of touch with its citizens.

The Criminal Justice Act was supposed to stem the growing tide of protest in the Green Movement, but like most of Michael Howard's 'Law & Order' measures, it has had the opposite effect. Non-violent direct action is now a daily occurrence across the country: live exports, roads, quarries, arms fairs, diggers, nuclear plants, company AGMs, welfare cuts... huge numbers of people of all ages and from all walks of life are getting involved.

They can see a crumbling society: the relentless destruction of the environment, declining health, bad food, homelessness, poverty and crime - these problems seem to have been with us forever. Our political system has not merely failed to alleviate them, it's made them worse! Finally there seems to be a real groundswell of people questioning the conventional wisdoms which have so let them down. They want to see real change, and having exhausted all conventional means of getting their voices heard - writing letters, attending inquiries, lobbying politicians, etc., they are taking to the streets.

The authorities are worried, and their ill-judged if predictable response is to clamp down even harder. For millions of people the police are no longer perceived as a benign force exercising their role as protectors of the people and upholders of the law.

A Police State

With increasing centralisation and government control of the Police 'Service', it being used against the people to protect vested interests. It is increasingly beginning to resemble and act like forces from oppressive police states - heavy duty riot gear, longer batons, CS gas, and increased powers to stop and search on a whim.

Video surveillance, bugging, phone tapping and intimidation are being used against activists who have committed no offences. Unlawful arrests to temporarily remove nuisance protesters is now commonplace, whilst others have been convicted and imprisoned on ludicrous conspiracy charges.

No confidence in police

Faith in the police has further declined as they have shown themselves to be a law unto themselves. Complaints against officers are rarely upheld, and punishment for those who are identified is even less common. Increasingly the public are resorting to civil action to see justice done. Compensation costs paid out by the police are rising rapidly year on year.

Once again we appeal to the police officers at every level - do you really want a Police State: to be at war with the people, spying on every citizen, using coercion and violence to maintain control? That is the way our society is going, and your demands and acceptance of increased powers and repressive equipment is accelerating the process. Stop acting on behalf of oppression. Come back to community policing and protect us from violent security guards, illegal bailiffs and corrupt officials.

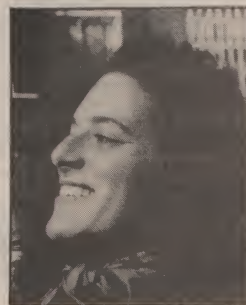
Let's work together for a peaceful, just and sustainable society for all.

Oxford Greens win County By-election Liberal Democrats dirty trick backfires

The Green Party gained its second seat on Oxfordshire County Council in a By-election on 11th April. The Liberal Democrats called the election when most of the greener voters - students - were away on Easter Holiday, rather than saving time and money by holding it at the local elections on May 2nd. Their undemocratic gesture backfired and the Green candidate, Sushila Dhall, took the seat comfortably.

Green Party	373	51.6%
Lib Dem	287	39.7%
Conservative	63	8.7%

Sushila joins Dr. Caroline Lucas, and with two Greens on the County Council they now constitute a Group, entitling them to positions on the main committees and access to Group Briefings. Until now, Caroline's ability to represent her constituents has been hampered by the restrictions imposed upon her by fellow Councillors.



Councillor Sushila Dhall

(Local Elections results are on page 26)

However, alarmed of the prospect of a Green Group on the Council, the Liberal Democrats, supported by the Tories, are attempting to move the goalposts in order to deprive the Greens of Group status. They want to redefine a Group, from two to seven members of the same party! Needless to say the Greens are fiercely resisting this outrageous attempt to isolate them, and hopefully the voters of Oxfordshire will show what they think of such activities in next year's County Council Elections.

A graduate of St. Hilda's, Sushila Dhall works as a supervisor at a homeless peoples' drop-in centre in Central Oxford and campaigns for the homeless and mentally ill.

With Oxford City Centre now represented by a Green on the County Council, and three more on the City Council, it shows what can be done with a highly enlightened, well educated and independent thinking electorate.

Mad cows and monstrous politics

British **S**pawned **E**pidemic

A sickening aspect of the BSE crisis has been the politicians' attitude and behaviour. Whatever reaction the Government had expected by revealing the fatalities from a new strain of CJD and its probable (then possible, then unlikely) relationship to BSE infected cows, a collapse of the market and world wide ban on beef products surely exceeded their worst nightmares. Seeing votes vanishing from consumers, farmers and everyone else connected to the industry, political survival took precedence over all else.

Beef is safe?

The overriding priority was to restore 'confidence', and convince everyone that British beef was *safe*. *"The scientists say so"*, they whinged. Hang on, aren't these the same Government scientists whose advice over the past 10 years helped you into this mess? And what about the *independent* scientists who got it right? They are not saying *"beef is safe"*. Furthermore, how come you are suddenly listening to scientific advice at all? A shame you didn't pay more heed to their warnings on things like ozone depletion and global warming before the crises were well underway.

CUSTODIANS

We are a national group of campaigners who believe in a Creator and oppose the slaughter and exploitation of animals.

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Beef is votes

It wasn't just the Tories. Labour and Lib Dems were in a quandary. Whilst they were keen to capitalise on the Government's difficulties, they were more concerned about being blamed for job losses, and so joined in the battle to restore confidence in British beef, irrespective of whether it's safe or not.

And they are succeeding, at home, at least, with beef sales back to 85% of normal. Not so in France and Germany, where sales remain flat for anyone's beef. No wonder Europe is resisting attempts to lift the ban, with 250 new cases of BSE are still breaking out each week in Britain. So now Europe is to blame for the crisis.

The real victims

And so the culling begins. The real victims are not farmers, abattoirs, exporters or feedstock producers. Any hardships they face pale into insignificance when compared to the suffering they have inflicted on these gentle, trusting creatures. They are being herded into the slaughterhouses, to a terrifying and undignified death, sacrificed for their master's greed and inhumanity.

The Green Movement must now pile on the pressure for a change of direction. The public have been deceived into believing Daisy and Buttercup passed a decent existence grazing in green fields, and are disgusted at discovering the truth. Banning animal-based feed does not address the problems of intensive farming. If, as the herds are replaced, they are again crammed into sheds, made pregnant as frequently as possible, and dosed to the eyeballs with drugs, it won't be long before the next nightmare arrives.

BSE campaign
see page 27

End of the World is Nigh**The Doom & Gloom column**

The trendy thing for Greens these days to talk about 'solutions', 'empowerment' and lots of other positive stuff, and to avoid turning people off with dire warnings of the impending environment catastrophe. Such unfashionable tactics, apparently, belong in the past. To Hell with that - the world is in a terrible state and getting worse - at Green World we tell it like it is, so if you're of a weak disposition or like to bury your head in the sand, don't read on.

Ozone depletion at record levels

Full marks to The Independent whose leading front page story on March 8 1996 was headlined "Hole in ozone layer threatens UK", and described how ozone levels this Spring were the worst on record. That the continuing deterioration of the ozone layer deserves such attention is undeniable - but no one else in the media gave it such prominence. Most of them continue to totally ignore the *real* issues of today.

Last summer it was announced that the ozone hole over the antarctic was double that of the year before, and was now the size of Europe. At the same time, the worst ever hole over the arctic was discovered, with ozone levels down by 50% in the Arctic vortex at March 1995.

Officials played down these findings saying that things were expected to get worse as the amounts of ozone destroying compounds in the atmosphere peaked. They predicted that levels would peak shortly, then fall as the measures agreed at the Montreal Protocol took effect. The ozone layer would start to recover (though it would take about 50 years!)

However, the latest figures are much worse than expected and scientists are alarmed. One does not have to look far for possible explanations, for example:

1. CFCs, supposedly all but eliminated, are still being manufactured in Russia and China, and are being smuggled into the USA in massive quantities to service 140 million cars containing CFCs, and millions of fridges and home air conditioners. Whilst production has stopped, the sale and use of CFCs in America is still legal.

2. High altitude aircraft are spewing out hundreds of tons of water vapour and nitrogen oxides directly into the stratosphere, which react to destroy ozone. This is a rapidly growing industry where little heed is being paid to this issue.

3. The widespread use of massive quantities of chlorinated solvents, used in electronics, dry cleaning, plastics, etc., and methyl bromide (horticultural fungicide). Attempts to eliminate these worldwide are proving even harder than CFCs.

4. A Greenpeace report last year revealed that the USA was intending to cut the funding designed to help developing countries phase out or ban ozone depleting chemicals.

The implications of ozone depletion are truly terrifying. UN scientists warned governments last year that skin cancer cases have increased by 250,000 per year, and that 7m tonnes of fish would be lost due to increasing UV-B radiation from the sun. Even more serious is the potential effects on plankton and micro-organisms at the beginning of the food chain, whose destruction will disrupt entire eco-systems. It is the usual story of profits before prophets and too little too late.

Next issue: Global Warming: 1995 was the hottest year ever, or at least since records began 150 years ago.

Sweet dreams everyone.

"What can you do when the powers that be - government, industry, law - do nothing to prevent genocide and even aid and abet the oppressive forces by selling them arms? Well, you can take a hammer and do the work of disarming yourself".

Night raid

They came at night. Three avenging angels would wreak terrible damage on the murderous Hawk, before it could deliver terror and death on an innocent folk at the behest of the evil tyrant who had invaded their lands and massacred their kin.

In the hush of the night of January 29th, Andrea, Jo and Lotta snipped through the fence surrounding British Aerospace in Warton, Lancashire. In clear view of security cameras, they prised open the doors of a hanger, where Hawk jet ZH955, destined for Indonesia, loomed before them.

Armed with eye-witness accounts of Hawk bombing raids against defenceless villages in East Timor, (and hammers!), the three women shattered the icy silence as they smashed the Hawk's radar and weapons systems. *No one came.* They hung banners over the crippled jet, poured seeds and ashes over its wings, and left their personal statements of intent on video and paper.

They hugged, sang, hammered some more and blew a tin whistle. *Still no one came.* They waved at a passing patrol which ignored them, and so danced outside the hanger on a freezing starlit night, directly in front of the security cameras. *Still no one came.* After two hours on site, they used a phone in the hanger to call the Press Association, asking them to call BAe security to send someone to deal with them. It was another 20 minutes before a guard turned up. Eventually they were arrested for illegal entry and criminal damage (estimated at over £1m).

Later one of their chums, Angie, publicly announced her intention to disarm a jet, and was subsequently arrested and charged with conspiracy to commit damage. All four women await trial in prison.

Seeds of hope East Timor Ploughshares by Andrea Needham



Andrea Jo Lotta Angie

Iraq is run by a highly unsavoury regime, with an established record of use of chemical weapons and internal suppression (for which Hawks could in theory be used), but it is rich in natural resources and therefore potentially powerful.

The words of George Younger (then Secretary of State for Defence), when recommending in 1989 that British Aerospace be allowed to sell Hawk ground-attack aircraft to Iraq, sum up our government's attitude to weapons sales: *As long as the country in question has plenty of natural resources which British firms can exploit, violations of human rights can be overlooked.*

This is certainly true of the current deal to sell Hawks to Indonesia; human rights abuses there and in occupied East Timor are well documented and quite undeniable. But the deal continues - under the guise of providing jobs for British workers - because Indonesia has huge resources of oil, minerals and timber which Britain is anxious to exploit at favourable rates. In an orgy of mutual back scratching, we give aid to Indonesia (to be used for very dubious projects such as power stations in largely unpopulated

areas); Indonesia buys British weapons; and British companies have free access to Indonesia's abundant resources and cheap labour. Never mind about the 200,000 dead in East Timor, the widowed, the orphaned, the bereaved. Trade is all-important. Trade and, of course, ingratiating Britain with a brutal dictator in charge of a large country in a strategically very important area of the world.

But the Hawk deal is meeting with enormous resistance from ordinary people in Britain, with a campaign involving non-violent direct action, lobbying, letter writing, petitions, vigils, marches - action of every kind, including direct disarmament.

In a remarkably honest letter revealed during the Scott Inquiry, William Waldegrave said: *'The judgement is, are we strong enough as a trading nation to spurn [Iraq's] market on the grounds of morality? If we were, we should'. On balance, I judge that we are not.'*

Fortunately, there are plenty of people strong enough to resist this Government's actions on the grounds of morality, and together we can stop this terrible deal.

The Centre for Defence Information (Washington) on Hawks: *"designed to be used against guerrillas who come from and move among civilian populations and who have no adequate means of response to air attack."*

The Indonesian record of human rights abuses are described by Amnesty International as taking place "on a staggering scale."

In 1975, Indonesia invaded East Timor just 10 days after the Timorese people pro-claimed their independence. The United Nations has never recognised Indonesia's occupation. Some 200,000 Timorese, a third of the pre-invasion population, have died.

For more information:

Seeds of Hope - East Timor Ploughshares: Box S, 55 Queen Margaret's Grove, London N1 4PZ 0171 923 9511 (campaigning group for the imprisoned women)
Stop the Hawks - No Arms to Indonesia, c/o 88 Islington High Street, London N1

Write to the women:

Andrea Needham VD0088
Angie Zelter VD0184
Lotta Kronlid VD0087
Joanna Wilson VD0089
H.M.P Risley Remand Centre, 617 Warrington Road, Risley, Cheshire WA3 6BP

Indictment

The People v British Aerospace and the British Government

British Aerospace and the British Government are charged as follows:

STATEMENT OF OFFENCE

Aiding and abetting genocide, contrary to the Genocide Act 1948
Aiding and abetting murder, contrary to Section 4 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1961

PARTICULARS OF OFFENCE

British Aerospace and the British Government on the 10th day of June 1993 conspired to breach the Genocide Act and the Offences Against the Person Act by agreeing to the sale of 24 Hawk attack aircraft to Indonesia, in the knowledge that the Hawks will be used by the Indonesian military to commit murder and further the campaign of genocide against the people of East Timor.

Lotta Kronlid, Andrea Needham, Joanna Wilson, Angela Zelter

The Scott Report

The real scandal

by Jenny Jones

The real scandal behind the Scott Report was not whether guidelines were changed, or that Parliament was 'misled'. Although in the light of the evidence presented, the Government's denials and refusal to take responsibility beggars belief.

Nor was the real scandal about using gagging orders to withhold information that might expose their nefarious activities, at the risk of "innocent" persons being imprisoned. Considering the business they were involved in, if the entire management of Matrix-Churchill had been incarcerated, their suffering would be infinitesimal compared to those on the receiving end of Saddam Hussein's murderous regime.

The real scandal was Britain's role in building up the Iraqi war machine, knowing full well the ruthless nature of Saddam, as exemplified by his use of chemical warfare against the Kurds in 1988.

The Government's most outrageous claim was that Britain supplied no lethal weapons to Iraq. Whether they arrived directly from Britain, or via third party countries, the British contribution was substantial. According to the Government, Britain acted more responsibly than others because we didn't supply them with actual guns. What we did, in fact, was much, much worse. British machine tools enabled Iraq to manufacture their own shells, making their military machine more self-sufficient. We also provided training and know how.

Even more disturbing was Britain's contribution to Saddam's development of weapons of mass destruction, chemical and nuclear, not forgetting the supergun affair.

We pay the bill

It's also amazing that there wasn't public outrage at the fact that British taxpayers paid for much of the equipment. The Government's Export Credit Guarantee Department guaranteed over a billion pounds' worth of British exports to Iraq, of which 20% could go on defence equipment. The Government's last estimated "total exposure" of ECGD on Iraq was £652m.

Yet all the focus was on whether this or that minister had misled parliament. This in itself is farcical, as hardly a day goes by without some politician issuing a stream of misleading rhetoric. By giving only part of the truth, or selective use of statistics, they are constantly providing us with a totally false picture, whether it's about health, tax, education, unemployment.... They call this "spinning". I call it lying. Oh, but I forgot. MPs don't lie, do they? If an MP accuses another of lying, he/she must retract the accusation or be suspended from the House. Yet some of them have got so used to it they wouldn't recognise the truth if it hit them in the face.

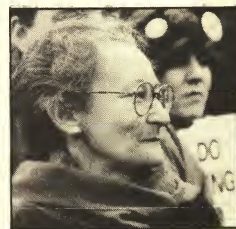
The Scott Report failed to live up to its expectations of delivering a fatal body blow to the Government. It contained enough revelations to provoke a stream of ministerial resignations in more honourable days. But the present Government is not honourable. It blames anyone except itself and apologises for nothing. But whilst it cleverly outmanoeuvred the opposition and scraped through by one vote, the Scott Report left another indelible stain on a heavily soiled administration.

The real tragedy, however, is that nothing has really

changed. There will be no Freedom of Information Act, and in all probability, the Government will be more secretive than ever in future about arms sales. Meanwhile Britain continues to arm dictators and oppressive regimes, including Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and even Nigeria, despite international outrage at the murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his friends.

Business as usual

It is to Britain's shame that we make a business out of torture and death. Our best brains and most skilled engineers are employed in the development and production of weapons, whilst more enlightened countries have diverted/converted resources into environmental protection and waste management technology. As a result, Britain has a tiny share in what is now a multi-billion pound industry, whilst tens of thousands have lost their jobs in the declining "defence" industry. And we have become so dependent for orders from our top client, (Saudi Arabia) that we are willing to exile Saudi dissidents from the UK on the behest of the paying customer. How much lower can Britain sink?



Jenny Jones

Chair of the Executive
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British Arms blackmail

The Government is exerting pressure on Slovenia (part of former Yugoslavia) to buy British military equipment in return for support in its bid to join NATO and the EU.

At their Spring Conference in Dover, the Green Party passed a motion instructing the executive to enlist the Slovenian Greens in a joint protest against the British practice of tying diplomatic policy to arms deals.

This latest piece of "blackmail" came at a time when Britain's policy of promoting arms sales at all costs had come under intense public scrutiny via the Scott Report and the attempt to deport Saudi dissident Mohammed al Mas'ari to safeguard arms deals with Saudi Arabia.

The Green Party of Slovenia have members in the Slovenian government.

Janet Bloomfield

National Chair of CND

Calling for a global agreement to abolish nuclear weapons by the year 2000

**Interviewed by
James Abbott**

As Chair of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Janet Bloomfield is proud of the fact that for some four decades, CND has been the major British organisation working for a nuclear free world.

Janet graduated from Sussex University with a Geography degree. She then worked for the Health Service and Marks & Spencers before embarking on the task of bringing up a young family. Her 15 years involvement with CND culminated in becoming Vice Chair for a couple of years and then more recently National Chair.

Janet Bloomfield's work with CND has spanned momentous events not least the end of the 'Cold War' between the Soviet Union and the West. The 1980's saw huge popular demonstrations against US Cruise Missiles but the more recent CND campaign against French nuclear testing in the South Pacific harnessed the power of consumer boycotts.

Looking to the future, Janet believes that innovative new methods of protest are needed to respond to the continually evolving threats from nuclear weapons. She is also strongly optimistic that a nuclear free world is a realistic goal.

Future role of CND

Janet sees CND's role in the late 1990's as continuing to be a strong witness against nuclear weapons. Of the great 1980's marches she thinks that "they were right for the context then, but people now see the threat of all-out nuclear war as having receded. Society is also continually fragmenting away from the mass towards smaller pockets of different cultures and attitudes and this is a problem for CND. Mobilising hundreds of thousands of people is much harder than it used to be. More focused actions seem to be more effective now."

Janet stresses that CND played an important part in the campaign that led to

President Chirac's announcement that the French testing programme in the South Pacific was to end after six tests, instead of the eight planned. She also praised the Green Party's clear support for the boycott campaign. "CND collected at least half a million signatures supporting the boycott and there was a considerable impact on the French wine trade. I do think we curtailed the programme. I regret that China is continuing to test and CND will protest, but it is much harder with China being such a closed society."

A non-nuclear Europe

The British Government's support for the French testing programme was further evidence of the growing nuclear co-operation between the two countries. Chirac visited Britain at the end of 1995 to discuss this with John Major. Janet points out that CND is keen to mobilise the support of non-nuclear European nations against the development of any common European nuclear force.

"We will work with Ireland and Sweden within the EU who have traditionally been neutral and who will not be happy with a nuclear Euro force. Whatever policy evolves in the EU, CND believes it must be non-nuclear."

Whether a Euro nuclear force comes about or not, Janet believes that the justification for the possession of nuclear weapons is weaker than ever, raising awkward questions for the British and French governments as to who is being targeted. "Governments hate to talk about targeting because they know that once people realise these weapons are pointed at real human beings in other parts of the world they then think of the consequences. And then," she adds, "they think 'what if they were pointed at me?'. The immorality of it all comes over strongly."

New targets

CND suspects that in spite of official claims of no targeting, Third World countries in the Middle East and around the

Mediterranean perceived to threaten vital 'Western interests' do have weapons aimed at them. "There is", Janet points out "a lot of racism involved in these decisions."

Janet's belief in CND has never been dented by the accusation of subversiveness levelled at it by right wing politicians. "It is something you get used to and expect. I am very proud to be in CND which has consistently stood out as a witness against immoral, illegal weapons which do not bring security. Nuclear weapons threaten the planet's people and environment more immediately than any other threat. The Right cannot get away with the 'reds under the beds' ploy so much - and anyway they are turning to 'greens under the bed' now!"

"Nuclear psychology is about secrecy and lies. When official documents are released under the 30 year rule, it is often revealed that it was CND which was right and that it was the Government of the time which was lying."

CND and the Green Movement

Janet sees the development of co-operation between organisations in the Green/Environmental/Peace movements as being important although she prefers not to refer to it as 'coalition building'. "CND plays a major part in the National Peace Council which is the main umbrella peace body. And we have worked with Greenpeace on particular issues such as nuclear testing. But we were very disappointed that CND was not invited into the Real World initiative - that was a mistake. I do not see how environmental and sustainable development issues can be addressed without looking at nuclear disarmament. Rather than formal and bureaucratic coalition building, I see the way forward in working with like-minded organisations as being serious and effective networking."

"CND supports Abolition 2000 which involves 300 organisations around the world, coming together at key points in a campaign to see a global commitment to the abolition of all nuclear weapons to

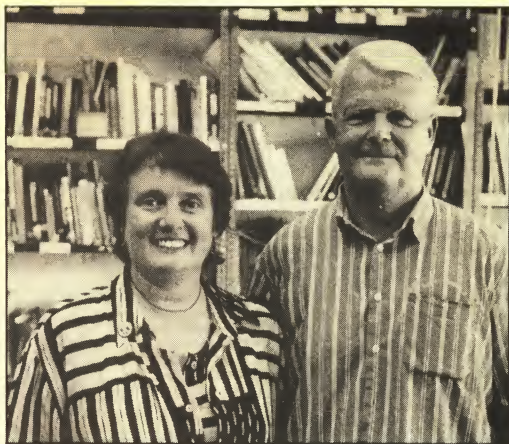
mark the millennium."

Green Politics

Of Green politics, Janet is positive about the staunchly pro-disarmament stand that the Green Party has always maintained. She sees the Labour Party as having moved away from CND's agenda. Does she see the Green Party as the natural political ally for CND where 15 years ago it would have been the Labour Party?

"The Labour Party has moved to the centre right. At grass roots level there is still support for CND as there is with some Labour MPs although they keep this quiet. I regret that Labour has not picked up on the latest opinion polls which show that a majority in Britain think nuclear weapons are unnecessary."

Janet offered a positive view of potential opportunities for both the Green Party and CND with the advent of Proportional Representation. "The key to help CND politically is PR. There will then be a chance for the Green Party and the Nationalist parties who have the same position as CND to achieve genuine representation. We must continue to try to recapture support for CND ideas within the Labour Party, but that is only a part



Janet Bloomfield with Bruce Kent

of our political work. CND needs to work for PR so that genuinely radical parties such as the Green Party can thrive."

Does Janet then think that CND should actively take part in any future referendum campaign for electoral reform?

"Personally speaking, yes, I do. I think that CND should be a part of a national movement in favour of PR if a Labour Government holds a referendum."

Abolition 2000

Looking to the future, Janet sees real hope that an end could be in sight to the era in which nuclear weapons have cast their dark shadow across the world.

"I would not be in this game if I didn't think a nuclear free world was achievable - it is obviously a very ambitious goal. More and more people from all parts of society are talking about it. Joseph Rotblat

won the Nobel Peace Prize last year for advocating a nuclear free world."

"The greatest marker for the millennium would be to abolish nuclear weapons. Even then it would take several decades to clear up the mess - a horrendous legacy which the human race has never faced before. We have to have the vision of a nuclear free world whilst opposing current nuclear programmes and it gives me great heart that public opinion can still be mobilised as in the case of French testing."

"Abolition 2000 - let's go for it!"

James Abbott is a member of the Witham & Braintree Green Party, and the Green Party's Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for the Witham & Braintree Constituency.

For more information about CND contact:

162 Holloway Road, London N1 8DQ

Tel: 0171 700 2393

Fax: 0171 700 2357

Email: cnd@gnet.apc.org

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Dirty tricks threaten wind farms

"Country Guardians" oppose conservation project

by Julian Edmunds

A unique project which aims to use the power of wind to protect Lowick Common's wildlife has been thrown out by South Lakeland District Council following opposition from a shadowy anti-wind pressure group. The project will be the subject of a Public Inquiry which is scheduled for September 1996.

In 1990, when the Lowick Hall Estate was sold at auction, Jim and Yvonne Miller bought the 300 acre common which surrounds their house. Their intention was to ensure that the land and its interesting and valuable flora and fauna were protected from abuse and exploitation.

Since then, the Miller's have worked hard to clean up the common and encourage its wildlife potential, while the public have continued to have access. Fourteen species of dragonfly have been recorded, as well as several colonies of *hirudo medicinalis* (the medicinal leech which for many years was thought to be extinct in the UK). They thought long and hard about how to protect the common after they were gone, and hit upon the idea of using a cluster of wind turbines to generate a trust fund for its preservation.

In October 1993, the Millers set up a wind data logger on Lowick Beacon to begin preparing their application for a contract under the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO). No one commented until May 1994, when a representative of Country Guardians addressed the Annual Parish Meeting.

Shortly afterwards an anonymous leaflet was distributed throughout the area stating that the turbines would cause serious noise problems, upset livestock and destroy wildlife. Planning officers then asked for the wind logger to be removed

as they had received "complaints", but never allowed the Millers to see the complaints.

Consultation period ignored

In December 1994 they were awarded a NFFO contract, and in 1995 submitted a planning application to South Lakeland District Council. The council set a deadline for consultation of September 8th, before that month's council meeting. But at the meeting on August 1, councillors voted to turn the scheme down, without bothering to visit the site. They also voted to hold back the refusal until the "consultation period" expired.

The stated reasons for refusal were based on the opinion of Cumbria County Council's Director of Economy and Environment, David Cole. In a consultation paper dated July 25th, he states that three wind turbines constitute a "large scale" development which is "more national than local in character", and therefore must meet far more stringent criteria to be permitted on land which can be seen from a National Park.

Dirty tricks

The British Wind Energy Association (BWEA) have obtained a copy of an "Urgent Action" letter circulated by Country Guardian two weeks before the decision to refuse the project. Its asks its members to write in by July 28th, long before the end of the "consultation period", and advises them not to mention Country Guardian. 150 letters of objection were received, many of

Country Guardians

Country Guardians have been on the scene for a little over two years. The vice president is Sir Bernard Ingham, formerly Mrs. Thatcher's press secretary and now a public relations advisor to Nuclear Electric. Their patron, Neil Kinnock, was responsible for Labour's policy U-turn on nuclear power and weapons. Country Guardian's favourite trick is to rush in whenever a plan for a wind farm is announced, hold a public meeting and give exaggerated accounts of the noise and visual intrusion. They have also written many letters to the press containing misleading information.

them by the same person writing from different addresses.

The October 1995 issue of the BWEA journal *Windirections* reports that another wind farm proposal near Hebden Bridge was the subject of hundreds of letters of objection from Japan! Seven out of eighteen wind farm projects in the current NFFO round have been refused permission.

Public support

Research consistently shows that a majority of people support wind energy. In a study into the Dyfi Valley wind farm (supported by the Green Party at a public inquiry in 1991), 75% of local residents approved of the visual appearance with only 7% were "bothered" by the look. A minority of people whose noise vastly outweighs their number are organising opposition to every wind project, irrespective of its merits. We supporters being more vocal, so why not write in with your views?

Letters can be written to: The Planning Inspectorate, Room 11/11(2), Tollgate House, Houlton Street, Bristol BS2 9DJ. Quote reference APP/MO933/A/95/259845 (Deadline 1st September 1996). Further information from James & Yvonne Miller, Hopefield House, Lowick Green, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 8EA Tel 01229 885285.

Julian Edmunds is Convenor of the Green Party's Energy Policy Working Group and may be contacted at: 40 Hencroft Street South, Slough SL1 1RE Tel 01753 824886 Email julian.edmunds@greenpress.org

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The Third Battle of Newbury

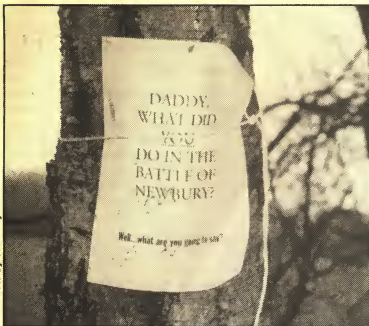


Photo by Steve Flynne

Update

Another phase in the Battle is over. Clearance of the site has stopped as the Spring nesting season began at the beginning of April. A three month struggle to save 10,000 trees, so who won?

Pitched against overwhelming odds, well over 1,000 security guards, police, bailiffs and contractors, the protesters put up an inspired resistance. The Criminal Justice Act together with every other "offence" they could dig out of the Statute books were used indiscriminately, and much unnecessary violence and brutality was inflicted on the protesters whenever the eye of the media was not there (and often when it was).

In the end, after over 700 arrests, 15% of the site remained intact, whilst the clearance costs were about six times the figure the bypass builders and police had budgeted for (over £6m). If that is extrapolated to the overall cost of building the bypass, they'll be looking at half a billion pounds!

On balance, round 1 to the protesters, we reckon.

Diggers reclaim Bypass route

A "Digger Community" is being set up along the route of the Newbury Bypass. It is inspired by the 17th Century "Diggers" or "True Levellers", who squatted, reclaimed and cultivated barren land in a radical challenge to the landowners.

The Newbury Digger Community is challenging the Highways Agency, who claim to "possess" the route of the Bypass. The route is now 85% cleared - most trees on route were evicted and felled before Easter. The Newbury Diggers are reclaiming the land of Snelmsmore Common, which has been ravaged by the bulldozers, planting a garden on the churned soil, and establishing a sustainable camp community. The Community was launched on 21 April when they arrived with shovels, plants, food etc.

"DIG WITH SPADES NOT BULLDOZERS!"
"STOP THE BYPASS!"

Visitors are always welcome. There are also 6 or so other off-route Newbury camps who would like to see you! For further info ring 01635 45544, 550552 (recorded updates) or 45545.

Next front

To continue work on the Newbury bypass the contractors will have to extract gravel from a proposed 100 acres site around where the rickety bridge and kennet camps were situated. This is an area of water meadows with mating swans, deer and a few trees. It is off-route and so can be squatted and very effectively defended. The evictions and extraction of the gravel will be paid for by Lord Sutton, owner of the land.

Without the gravel the road cannot proceed - and any evictions and security will have to be paid for by the Sutton estate, not the Highways Agency. People are being asked to squat the land and build defences. The battle has barely begun.

Comments

Some interesting responses on the latest developments: Pollard, Head of Thames Valley Police: *150 local families and 'professional agitators'...our friend David Rendel, Newbury Lib Dem MP: "threw a giant shadow over the environmental movement"... Hampshire Police: Welding spades and forks and other "dangerous weapons"... Rendel (again): like beanpoles and buckets which could be used "to maim police horse" ... Reliance Security: or "attack" security guards ... Michael Howard: they started "criminally damaging" ... English Nature: the land by digging it. Having "done more damage than the road builders".* (Quoted from another wonderful piece by John Vidal in the Guardian)



Resources:

London Cycling Campaign have moved to: 228 Great Guildford Business Square, Great Guildford St, London SE1 0HS 0171 928 7220

Road Alert!, PO Box 5544, Newbury RG14 5FB 01635 521770 - Provides latest information on all major road protests in Britain, and how you can help.

ALARM UK, Southbank House, Black Prince Road, London SE1 0171 582 9279 - Anti-roads direct action networking - Alarm Bells! newsletter provides inspiring reports and updates of current campaigns

A SEED, PO Box 92066, 1090 AB, Amsterdam, Netherlands +31-20-6682236 - Leading the battle against the monstrous TENs (Trans European Networks)

Earth First!, AU Subs, c/o Dead Trees EPI, Box 25, 82 Colston St, Bristol BS1 5BB - always on the frontline of non-violent direct actions in defence of the environment, Earth First! is a network of independent groups - find your nearest one in the listings found in Earth First! Action Update. Send a couple of stamps for a sample or £5 for 12 issues.

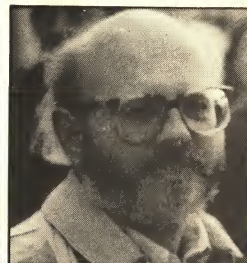
Basic Law for Road Protesters is a very comprehensive text book for anyone opposing a road scheme at any stage, from public inquiry to tree hugging. Contains all the legal gen on public inquiry rules. EC Directives, Acts of Parliaments including CJA and Public Order Act. Available free on Email or disk (send 3.5 in floppy + return postage) or £10 for the 112 page book version. Peter Gray, 284 Sturry Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1HQ Email pgray@ggn.apc.org

David Bellamy launches Road Traffic Reduction Tour

A national tour promoting the Road Traffic Reduction Bill has visited over 20 major cities, including Birmingham, Bath, Bristol, Cambridge, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Greenwich, Plymouth, Hull, Leeds, Sheffield, Lewes, Canterbury, Braintree, Cardiff and Nottingham.

Launching the tour in Newbury, over 500 people heard David Bellamy add his voice in support of the Bill. He said:

"There can be only one real answer to the hell that people in Newbury, and many other places, are suffering. We need policies to reduce road traffic. We need the Road Traffic Reduction Bill."



Prime architect of the Bill, Ron Bailey (pictured above) said:

"There are 21 million cars on the road in the UK. This could increase by more than 50% by the year 2025. Even the most massive road-building plans conceivable would not prevent congestion getting worse in the near future. There is only one long-term solution to congestion and the problems associated with ever increasing traffic growth: a national strategy to reduce road traffic as envisaged by the Road Traffic Reduction Bill. This is the only sane way forward to a cleaner, freer, and beautiful world."

During the tour, regular speakers included Charles Secrett (FoE Director), Green Party Principal Speakers Peg Alexander & David Taylor, and Ron Bailey. Special guests featured along the way included Sara Parkin (Forum for the Future), Stephen Joseph (Transport 2000) and Emma Must (ALARM UK) and Janet Alty (Green Party).

A second wave of dates are being planned. If you want the tour to visit your town, call Ron Bailey on 0171 490 1555.



Bill introduced to the House of Commons

On 20th March 1996 Cynog Dafis MP introduced the Road Traffic Reduction Bill to the House of Commons. The Bill is sponsored by FoE, the Green Party and Plaid Cymru. It calls for:

The Secretary of State for Transport to draw up a 'National Road Traffic Reduction Plan' to achieve a 5% reduction in road traffic miles by 2005, and 10% by 2010. The Plan to be reported on and debated by Parliament annually. Local Authorities to draw up local Road Traffic Reduction Plans authorising measures they consider appropriate to curtail traffic in their area.

The Bill was introduced under the 10 minute rule enabling a 10 minute speech proposing a Bill to be introduced. It stands no chance of becoming law this session due to a lack of time. The sponsors are therefore seeking the backing of an MP to introduce the Bill as a Private Member's Bill in the next Parliamentary Session.

Campaigners surround the Department of Transport

On Saturday 13 April 1996 supporters of FoE and the Green Party completely surrounded the Department of Transport to demand Government support for the Road Traffic Reduction Bill.

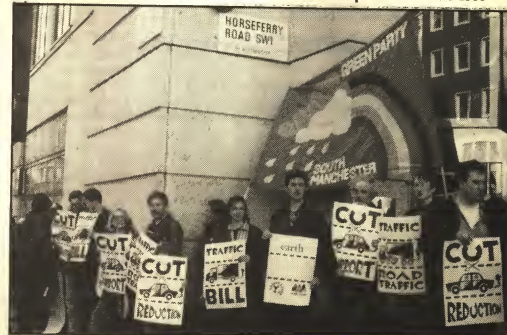
Hundreds of supporters from all over the country converged at the Department of Transport's offices in Westminster following revelations that the Government was to reject the use of targets to control spiralling traffic growth. This subsequently has turned out to be the case.

Having surrounded the offices, the demonstrators spilled out onto the road and reclaimed the street for an ad hoc party, forcing police to close the road for 3 hours.

David Taylor of the Green Party said: *"The campaign for the Road Traffic Reduction Bill attacks the root cause of the Government's failure to plan transport in an integrated way. We aim to take advantage of the deep rooted public concern over air pollution and road-building to build an alliance that will force the Bill through Parliament."*

To date the Road Traffic Reduction Bill is supported by nearly 100 Members of Parliament from all political persuasions, 60 Local Authorities and over 500 local groups and associations. Supporters are attempting to collect a million signatures for a petition to present to Parliament in November.

Please help: call 0171 490 1555



Campaigners surrounding the Department of Transport in London

The upside-down world of road safety

by Robert Davis

The dominance of the car is backed up by the use - or rather abuse - of language, particularly when it comes to what they call 'road safety'.

In a journal for traffic engineers there was an article about measures to reduce accidents involving cars being driven off the roads and into trees by sleepy or drunk motorists. The solution advocated was removal of roadside trees, and also stumps "as these can still be aggressive", as well as fences, since these are "a particularly aggressive form of man-made structure".

This is a natural progression of the tendency of motorists to blame inanimate objects for the danger they present to themselves and others. Problems are not caused by themselves as motorists, but by something for which they have no responsibility, such as "traffic".

The very meaning of the word "danger" is distorted. The transitive (doing to others) and intransitive (done to you) meanings of the word are confused, so a mode of transport like cycling which poses relatively little threat to others is "dangerous" because of the vulnerability of cyclists to the danger from cars. But because motorists are relatively invulnerable they are not "dangerous" - despite the fact danger that they pose to all other roads users is significantly greater than cyclists.

This becomes most obvious with the record of road safety. The opposite of the official "road safety" line is true; there has been a relentless increase in danger on the road as motorisation has increased. The chances of cyclists and pedestrians being killed or hurt on a given journey have increased over the last 40 years. One indication of this is the number insurance claims for crashed vehicles, an increase of 80% in the 80's, but as most

crashes don't involve personal injury, they don't count officially as "road accidents".

Of course, with fewer vulnerable road users, involving fewer of the more vulnerable age groups (elderly people and children), the overall number of road traffic fatalities has decreased. Fewer children are killed walking or cycling to school because of a dramatic decline in children's independent mobility - they are driven to school because of the danger on the roads!



There are other factors involved, such as superior medical facilities and adaptive behaviour by motorists forced to slow down in more congested conditions. But this does not mean that 'the roads are getting safer', any more than an increased threat of assault frightening women off the streets (reducing recorded assaults) means that the streets are safer for women.

Indeed, looking at one of the explanations advanced by the road safety lobby, the meaning of the word "safe" is often quite dubious. It is now increasingly accepted by road safety experts that drivers changing to cars more able to withstand crashes adapt their driving (albeit largely unwittingly) such that they pose more of a threat to other road users. For "more safe" read "more dangerous" - at least for those of us outside such cars.

Most of this correction to the violence done to the English language is a simple matter of inversion. If a road is redesigned to take more motor

vehicles at higher speeds, from the point of view of reducing danger it has been *downgraded*. Officially, of course, it will have been "upgraded".

Working through the way in which English has been transformed by motorese or roadsafeteyese we must challenge these assumptions through which we have all been affected. Challenging this sort of "political correctness" is central to the work of the movement for real road safety.

CONTACTS:

Roadpeace

The national traffic victim's charity, PO Box 2579, London NW10 3PW, 0181 964 1021

Road Danger Reduction Forum

c/o Leeds Road Safety Promotion Unit, Leeds City Council, Selectapost 6, 19 Wellington St, Leeds LS1 4RR 01132 475196.

Dr. Robert Davis is a transport policy advisor and author of 'Death on the Streets: Cars and the mythology of road safety' (see below), and 'Is it safe?: A guide to road danger reduction, available for £3 from Road Danger Reduction Forum (see above).

Death on the Streets - Cars and the mythology of road safety by Rob Davies

The arguments in the above article are greatly expanded in this book, fully exposing the official attitude to road safety and how it has deceived the British public over the last 50 years.

He describes how most 'road safety improvements', from seat belts to roads design, have actually resulted in a dramatic increase in the danger

from cars. Once a community meeting space, roads are now rightly seen as death traps.

Death on the Streets is an invaluable fact file and campaigning tool, with over 1,000 research references and an extensive index. It covers the subject exhaustively (*good pun*) with a very original approach and is one of the most damning indictments on car culture ever written.

ISBN 0-948135-46-8
304pgs £11.99
Leading Edge Press

The Road Danger Reduction Charter

1. Seek a genuine reduction in danger for all road users by identifying and controlling the principal sources of threat.
2. Find new measures to define the level of danger on our roads. These would more accurately monitor the use and threat to benign modes.
3. Discourage the unnecessary use of private motor transport where alternative benign modes or public transport are equally or more viable.
4. Pursue a transport strategy for environmentally sustainable travel based on developing efficient, integrated public transport systems. This would recognise that current levels of motor traffic should not be increased.
5. Actively promote cycling and walking, which pose little threat to other road users, by taking positive and co-ordinated action to increase the safety and mobility of these benign modes.
6. Promote the adoption of this charter as the basis of both national and international transport policy.

Sustrans

Routes for people

by Lucy Thorp

Sustrans (short for sustainable transport) leapt to fame in October of 1995 when it successfully convinced the Millennium Commission that the National Cycle Network was a visionary project fit for the next century.

John Grimshaw, Sustrans' founder, is a civil engineer who has been extolling the merits of cycling for many years. *"The bicycle is a highly efficient machine, and a modern one. We aim to convert those people who don't presently cycle by providing safe routes where they feel happy to ride and hopefully that first taste of cycling will encourage them to do more. Our routes are designed to be attractive; linear parks where people can cycle, walk, congregate and enjoy being away from the stress of traffic."*

The route's attractiveness is seen by Sustrans as key to the Network's success. Right from the early years, sculpture has had an important role in popularising the paths and these 'mileposts' are designed to make the traveller go that bit further. The sculpture programme is self-funding and

uses local artists and materials. Many of the paths also benefit from waterfountains and seats.

Another of the ideals behind Sustrans' philosophy is to get people on their bikes and out of their cars, not purely for the environmental benefits but for their health. *"People are beginning to see the irony in their habits - why drive to work and spend the evening at home on an exercise bike when you could cycle to work and get fit at the same time?"* said Grimshaw.

The Network is due to be completed in two stages: the first 2,500 miles of routes will be opened by Easter 2005 and the second 4,000 miles 5 years later. This daunting task doesn't phase Sustrans. The plan is to work in partnership with local authorities - already 250 have pledged their support for the project - and a number of other organisations including British Waterways and the Countryside Commission are working with Sustrans.

The Millennium Commission grant of £42.5m will only fund 23% of the first phase of the Network, and the remaining money will come from a variety of sources (see diagram below).



£183,000 the cost of the first 2,500 miles, may seem like a lot of money but in fact it is cheaper than one mile of the Limestone Link Road in London.

The project has captured the imagination of the general public with over 15,000 supporters in the UK. This source of funds is vital, not only as a stable income to match the Millennium grant but also as an indicator of the support for a more sustainable transport system.

All path work aims to use best environmental practice with the use of recycled and local materials. The recently opened York to Beringbrough path used recycled road planings from the A64. Great sensitivity is used when planning paths; wildlife habitats are respected and encouraged with management programmes that encourage biodiversity.

A misconception about Sustrans work is that the routes are only for cyclists. In fact Sustrans predicts that over 55%



Cyclists and walkers on the Bristol to Bath Path

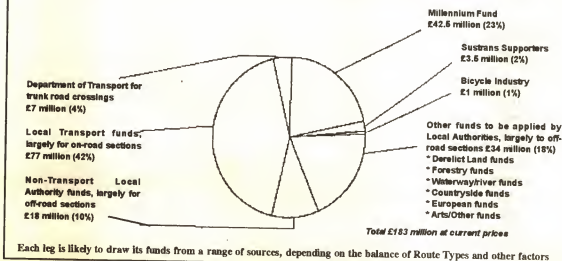
of the journeys on its routes will be by pedestrians. Existing paths are used by cyclists, walkers and disabled people. The Bristol to Bath path, for example, attracts over 1 million journeys per year.

The 140 mile Sea to Sea Cycle Route which was opened last year won the British Airways "Global Tourism for Tomorrow Award" which recognises environmentally responsible tourism. The Sea to Sea route has brought great benefits to the local community, with B&Bs, pubs and cycle hire shops thriving in what was an ailing community. Maps flagging the openings of a national Welsh route from Holyhead to Cardiff, as well as the Scottish National Route from Inverness to Glasgow to Carlisle, were published this spring.

In July this year Sustrans is organising a Trailblazing ride from Belfast to Lands End. This ride will go through Dublin, Holyhead, Cardiff and Bristol and riders can join for the whole ride or as long as they wish.

Lucy Thorpe is Press Officer for Sustrans. For further information on Sustrans work call 0117 929 0888 or write to Sustrans, 35 King Street, Bristol BS1 4DZ.

ANTICIPATED SOURCES OF FUNDS FOR THE NATIONAL NETWORK, 1995-2000



Air traffic - growing source of massive pollution and environmental degradation

Terminate Terminal 5

by John Bradley

The most important environmental and social debate in West London at present revolves around the public inquiry for a fifth terminal at Heathrow airport. This development has been likened to a new airport on top of the existing one. Heathrow's present capacity of 50 million passengers a year would increase by 60% to around 80 million.

The inquiry opened on 16th May 1995. Hounslow Green Party registered its objection, with the intention of putting forward a case on behalf of the Green Party. The T5 development merited a political response having more social and economic arguments against it than even the Newbury by-pass where environmental destruction is far more obvious. After several meetings between local Green Parties around the airport it became clear their resources were inadequate for the task.

At the same time, I was in touch with the local Friends of the Earth group who were having similar problems and we agreed that joining forces would serve the common interest. A team was set up under the umbrella title of West London Friends of the Earth and I joined as press officer.

West London FoE scored a significant victory during the pre-inquiry meetings by ensuring that the concept of sustainable development would be included in the inquiry. This would give an opportunity to widen the debate on economic grounds and to set the development in a global rather than purely local context.

We are the only people to do this. Most other groups are objecting on the grounds of

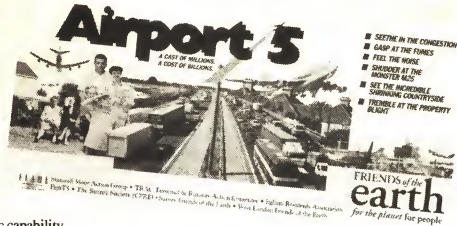
noise, the third runway and whether Heathrow is the best place for siting new air traffic capability.

FoE, to a large extent, are taking a far harder line in questioning the need for any increase in air traffic anywhere. Traditional objections to inquiries (of any nature) have concentrated on finding the least objectionable alternative. This proves disastrous as differing groups play pass the parcel with a new road, shopping centre, airport. The developer loses a little time but the march of "progress" carries on and another piece of the natural environment is forever lost.

Since submitting my proof I have seen how others have tackled the issue. There is no discussion of the global effects of T5, nor of alternative economic indicators. Most of the evidence submitted seems to rely on the government's White Paper *"This Common Inheritance"*.

On the political front, while local authorities of all political persuasions are fighting the proposals, MPs are widely split: Tory MP Nirj Deva is strongly against; other Tory MPs are strongly in favour. Local Labour MP, Alan Keen, has sat on the fence, presumably because he doesn't wish to upset local trade unions. Tony Blair, as expected, has also sat on the fence.

This billion pound development will create a further 48,000 car journeys PER DAY in the local area and lead to a massive expansion of the airport. Jobs will be safeguarded at a very high environmental price which cannot be described as "sustainable".



Help terminate T5

If built, T5 will be the largest structure ever built in Green Belt land, carving up open spaces and causing further property blight. It will be Europe's 3rd largest airport in its own right, after Frankfurt and the rest of Heathrow, and will increase the pressure for a third runway and for widening the M25. There are positive alternatives.

Easy action

Send an objection to:

Your MP at: The House of Commons, London SW1 0AA.

Any known prospective parliamentary candidates.

The Inspector, T5 Inquiry Secretariat, Ramada Hotel, Bath Road, Hounslow TW6 2AQ.

Remember, you do not have to write pages. Just say what you think and ask for a reply.

Further information:

West London Friends of the Earth

0171 566 1678 or 0181 759 0549

Air transport - the neglected issue?

When compared to road transport, the attention given to air transport by the Green Movement is minuscule. Its visible impact on people and planet is mainly based around airports, where noise, traffic congestion, safety and land-use issues prevail. Jenny Jones' article last issue highlighted the devastation of local communities and sensitive environments from global tourism. However, the most neglected issue is the question of what effect some 400,000 aircraft is having on the atmosphere, as they spew out pollutants directly into it.

Air transport is expected to nearly double in the next 10 years. It consumes about 13% of total transport fuel, and 3% of emissions. This may seem low, but the environmental impact of high altitude emissions, molecule for molecule, is far greater than at ground level. Scientists are concerned that aircraft emissions' contribution to ozone depletion will actually negate the endeavours of the Montreal Protocol, whilst NASA have stated the need for substantially more research with relation to global warming.

The aviation industry has avoided public scrutiny for too long. It's time we changed that.

Jonathon Porritt & Sara Parkin launch 2 new Green initiatives

by Peter Barnett

Two dramatically different green organisations were launched this Spring. **Forum for the Future** embraces the business community, and aims to encourage "best environmental practice" by promoting positive solutions to the environmental crisis.

Real World, on the other hand, comprises a coalition of 32 campaigning and voluntary sector organisations, committed to pressurising the main political parties to address the *real* issues facing the world today, those of sustainable development, social justice and democratic renewal, particularly in the run up to the next General Election.

Forum for the Future

Three leading figures from the Green Party's past, Paul Ekins, Jonathon Porritt and Sara Parkin are behind FFF.

"At the 1992 Earth Summit, world leaders accepted that the Earth's life support systems are being undermined and over-exploited. But it remains the case that our collective response to this crisis is still wholly inadequate, despite enormous leaps in scientific knowledge and public awareness over the last 5 years. Much of what is being done risks being 'too little, too late'."

More and more people now believe that the best way forward is to lay much greater emphasis on positive solutions to the crisis. Most of these solutions already exist, be they technological, political or economic. Examples of best practice and pioneering innovation are all around us, but few mechanisms or organisations exist to multiply their beneficial impact.

This will be the mission of Forum for the Future."

Big names Big business

FFF has already attracted a host of prominent and influential people. Richard Branson, Jonathon Dimbleby, Peter Gabriel, Douglas Adams, Michael Grade, Will Hutton, David Puttnam, Anita Roddick, Glenys Kinnock MEP and Chris Patten are all members of the Forum's Council. Also on board is Des Wilson, the ex-Lib Dem Campaigns Director (who vowed to annihilate the Green Party), now an executive of the BAA and a vigorous promoter of the highly unsustainable Heathrow Terminal 5.

The funding of FFF is underpinned by 12 Founding Corporate Partners, who include B&Q, Body Shop, Nat West Bank, Taj Int. Hotels, Tesco and Wessex Water.

Five key activities will form the basis of FFF:

Forum Scholarships

To train a dozen young people each year, equipping them with the skills and knowledge that future leaders and decision makers will need in the pursuit of a Green society.

Sustainable Economy Unit

To research and promote Green economics, showing how a sustainable economy is viable and desirable, covering areas such as employment, tax and benefits.

Green Futures Publications

To publish examples of best practice from around the world, targeting key decision makers, especially in business and local government.

Best Practice in Sustainability Database

To provide a state-of-the-art resource bank about best practice for sustainable development for all who require it.

Green Futures Consultancy

To provide expertise on the strategic and structural implications of sustainable development.

Greenwash?

The Corporate Partners have shown some commitment to green issues, but many have shown more commitment to profits at the expense of people and the planet. Quite recently, Tesco and Nat West have been the object of consumer boycotts called by Greenpeace and FoE, over CFC coolants, Norwegian whaling and Third World Debt.

But to believe that Porritt, Parkin and Ekins have set up FFF simply to provide companies with a bit of "greenwash" whilst conducting business as usual, is to completely misunderstand the entire concept. They have no illusions about the potential ruthlessness of big business. Nor do they hesitate to condemn. Porritt

recently described Shell's Nigerian operation as "a 30-year history of human exploitation and environmental devastation", and said of the murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa and friends: "but the latest in a long line of crimes against the Ogoni people and their land. Ogoni blood still stains that sickly yellow logo and the company's current efforts to wash it off give a new meaning to the notion of greenwash".

Porritt believes that more is to be gained by working with, rather than against people - a basic Green principle of co-operation! Employing expertise and knowledge across the globe, FFF will become a highly influential think-tank, disseminating green solutions through education, consultancy and communications. It will get many "best practices" from Green Parties, who in turn, will find FFF an invaluable resource for policy development and campaign ideas.

Green solutions

Capitalism cannot be greened - a truly sustainable society will require radical change of our economic and political systems. A society serving the needs of all stakeholders (including all non-human lifetimes) will require changes that would horrify most of FFF's benefactors. The three founders know this. FFF defines sustainable development as "A process which enables all (especially the less well off in our divided world) to realise their potential and improve their quality of life in ways that protect and enhance the Earth's life support systems".

FFF points out "the environmental cause is being held back by a general lack of knowledge amongst people of the astonishing potential for transforming our economies and lifestyles". FFF will spread this knowledge to companies, local authorities, communities, quangos and government departments. Much will fall on deaf ears, but it will promote wider adoption of good practices, buying the planet more time, whilst sowing the seeds of Green ideas in many minds. It should stand on even a few of the super-rich that they are despoiling their own nest, and leaving a nightmarish legacy for their kids.

FFF will play a vital role alongside the many other strands of the Green Movement in pushing forward the Green agenda. And how much better for business to donate funds to FFF rather than bunging it at the Tory Party!

Real World

by Peter Barnett

The driving force behind Real World is one I understand only too well. As an Area Press Officer in the last General Election, and having run the Green Party national press office in the 1994 European Elections, I experienced first hand the frustration and anger as politicians and the media pointedly avoided the *real* issues, and effectively excluded the Green Party from the campaign.

Apart from an occasional glimpse at education and health, the campaigns focused on tax and personality politics. The only exception came in the final week, when constitutional reform was raised, thanks to Charter 88's Democracy Day.

Other organisations were desperately trying to get their issues on the agenda, but met the same blank wall as the Green Party. So over the last 4 years a broad coalition of NGOs have been painstakingly drawing up a programme on which they

a diverse set of organisations, finding common ground inevitably resulted in compromises. As it is, some environmental groups dropped out, unhappy with the constitutional and social justice issues.

Whilst the absence of key issues like nuclear arms & power, animals and basic income is disappointing, Real World offers the best hope of getting Green issues discussed at the next election. But already the signs are not good. Apart from the Guardian, Observer and Independent, the press totally ignored the official launch of Real World, as did Channel 4 and ITV, whilst the BBC dropped it by lunchtime.

With its failure to break the media blackout at election time, the Green Party will wish Real World every success. It is, after all, promoting a series of reforms which have been Green Party policy for years. Not so the other parties. The Tories will want to ignore it, whilst it presents serious difficulties for Labour and the Lib Dems, particularly with respect to the public investment plans, to which neither would dare commit themselves.

This hasn't stopped some Lib Dems from claiming the Real World agenda is essentially LD policy, calling on Real World to simply endorse them. Apart from precluding every charity from the coalition, this stupid request would wreck the whole idea. The moment they were endorsing one particular party, it would instantly set all the others against them.

Let us hope Real World not only succeeds in getting Green issues discussed, but also shows they have strong public support. This might put Green politics back on the agenda during and after the election, and even persuade the main parties that the time has come to actually address the need for real change.

If, on the other hand, the coalition totally fails to break the big silence, the question then is:

"What on Earth do we do now Jonathon and Sara?"



Michael Taylor
(Christian Aid)

Jonathon Porritt

Carolyn Miller
(Save the Children)

The Real World 12 point Programme for Government

- A £1 billion annual programme of public investment in local, community and voluntary enterprises.
- Ecological restructuring of the tax system.
- A Bill of Rights (following extensive public consultation).
- A timetable to achieve within 10 years the UN development aid target of 0.7% of GDP.
- A housing strategy to provide at least 100,000 affordable homes in the social housing sector each year for the next 10 years.
- An integrated transport programme with the target of reducing road traffic by 10% from 1990 levels by the year 2010.
- A programme for the reduction of the UK's CO2 emissions by at least 20% by the year 2005, as a first step towards deeper reductions.
- Leadership at international level to promote an enforceable code of conduct on international arms transfers; to abolish anti-personal mines.
- An integrated strategy to increase the consumption of fresh and nutritious food.
- Leadership at European and global levels to secure effective regulation of international trade and investments to safeguard social and environmental standards.
- Binding legal protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- Regular publication of a new measure of economic welfare which includes social and environmental factors.



David Taylor presents Sara Parkin with the Green Party's critique of Real World



Peter Merry (Green Party International Youth Co-ordinator) with Jonathon Porritt

can all agree.

Bearing in mind the bitter divisions that occur within single organisations, this in itself is a remarkable achievement. With a combined supporter base of over 2 million, the coalition plans to pressurise the main parties to address the problems facing people in the *real* world. It will urge them to a commitment on 12 key reforms for implementation in their first term.

The Real World agenda is not a Green Party manifesto, nor could it be. With such

The Real World Coalition

ALARM UK, Birmingham Settlement, Black Environment Network, British Assoc. of Settlements & Social Action Centres, Catholic Institute for International Relations, Charter 88, Christian Aid, Church Action on Poverty, Employment Policy Institute, Forum for the Future, FoE (England Wales and NI), FoE (Scotland), KAIROS, Media Natura Trust, Medical Action for Global Security, Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation, New Economics Foundation, Oxfam (UK & Ireland), Population Concern, The Poverty Alliance, Public Health Alliance, Quaker Social Responsibility & Education, Save the Children, Scottish Education & Action for Development, SAFE Alliance, Sustrans, Town & County Planning Association, Transport 2000, Unemployment Unit, United Nations Association, World Wide Fund for Nature (UK), International Institute for Environment & Development.

All photos: Ila Schneider



Leamington L.I.S.T.

Promoting **LOCALLY-OWNED INDEPENDENT SERVICES & TRADERS**

by Janet Alty

The Leamington List is a scheme designed to encourage people to support local enterprises whenever possible, to help build and maintain a healthy local economy.

A comprehensive 40 page directory contains details of qualifying businesses, and is distributed free to local people. The 2nd edition contains over 100 businesses, and has proven invaluable in forming people of services and traders they didn't know existed.

Leamington List is run by Warwick & Leamington Green Party.

Why "Locally-owned"? People who live and work in their community offer a service which goes beyond earning their living. "Locally-owned" therefore does not include the many independent business owners who trade in Leamington, but who live in surrounding towns and villages. "Locally-owned" does not include those traders who live and work in Leamington but who also own businesses outside this area. "Locally-owned Independent" does not include franchises because franchises are dependent on the parent company for the goods they supply.

This all seems very straightforward on the face of it. But it took us a remarkably long time to get to here! We spent many hours over many meetings over many years (yes I mean years!) trying to work out what the key and crucial indicators were to determine 'Green' traders. We looked at all sorts of ethical and environmental factors, and never could fix on what was most important - until of course we saw the answer staring us in the face. Green is about economics, is about local.

Ownership brings responsibility. Local ownership is accountable. Locally-owned businesses make their locality more prosperous because they keep the money circulating locally - as proved by other Local Parties doing local surveys. Locally-owned businesses also give a community its commercial identity - the multiples are the same in anytown anywhere.

The hard decision was determining the boundary of our locality. In the end, we concluded that we had to accept the current economic boundary of our District Council. This meant excluding some traders who were very supportive, but we felt we had to have a 'hard edge' otherwise we could be

justifiably accused of subjective judgement.

The LIST project certainly seems to be an idea whose time has come - but we would not recommend it lightly. It is hard work talking to people and persuading them to work collectively and cooperatively when they have been brought up to believe this is a cut-throat world and a plague on the competition. It takes a lot of time and commitment (and an ability to bounce up when knocked down!)

We definitely recommend it as an excellent way of bringing the Green Party to the notice of a group of people who would not normally recognise that they have much in common with us. We believe the long term credibility coming out of this could be very great. We'd be glad to help anyone else to get started.

Janet Alty is a Green Party activist who has held posts too numerous to mention, including Convenor of the Green World Editorial Board. She is currently on Mediation Committee. For more information about LIST contact Janet at: 18 Lillington Road, Leamington Spa, Warwick CV32 5YU 01926 427773 Email janetalty@gn.apc.org

Freedom to Care

IMAGINE how quickly the world might start changing if employees were able to exercise the right to freedom of speech in the workplace without fear of reprisals! Many of our global problems would have to be confronted. After all, most of them are created in and by the workplace.

WE DEFEND employees who have spoken out about the socially and environmentally damaging practices of their employers. We are building a CAMPAIGN to extend citizenship into the workplace by, for example, challenging gagging clauses in employment contracts, protecting courageous whistleblowers and demanding the public accountability of managers.

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Low level radiation campaign

by Dr. Chris Busby

The Low Level Radiation Campaign's purpose is to alert the public of a serious threat to health from the global distribution of radioactive pollutants originating from nuclear bomb testing and nuclear power. In the last 50 years a range of novel fission-product isotopes have contaminated everything on the planet. These substances cause genetic damage and a range of fatal diseases, mainly cancer.

Risk factors

The thesis began in the peak fallout period of the 60s with warnings from Nobel laureates Pauling & Sacharov, and has been persistently marginalised and ridiculed by the nuclear establishment and nations. With recent publicity over the Sellafield leukaemia cluster and increased incidence of cancer after Chernobyl, pressure is increasing for a reassessment of the published risk factors for radiation exposure, currently based on cancer yield studies of Hiroshima bomb survivors. These are inappropriate for predicting cancer in populations, where long-term exposure is from ingested fission products, accumulating in living tissue.

2nd Event Theory

Chris Busby's *Second Event Theory* explains the danger from isotopes like Strontium 90, which bind to chromosomes and decay twice in succession. In certain circumstances this can bypass repair mechanisms in cells which have evolved over millions of years to cope with natural background radiation. This concept can account for nuclear site cancer clusters, and also the increase, 20 years after the fallout, of cancer in high rainfall areas. Cancer trends in Wales follow closely the exposure of the population some 20 years earlier.

A winning strategy

The campaign began in 1992 in Wales, using a strategy developed by the Wales Green Party Strategy Group. Essentially it involves producing a small booklet on the issues, and using direct action against appropriate targets to draw in the media who receive copies of the booklet. This winning combination has gained us a high profile on several occasions. Indeed, this approach closed Trawsfynydd nuclear power station with the 1992 booklet *Low Level Radiation from the Nuclear Industry*. In 1994 we produced *Radiation and Cancer in Wales*, and *Wings of Death* in 1995, a 350 page analysis of the issue, funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.

Using EC environmental law, Richard Bramhall (Wales Green Party Press Officer) prevented the burning of nuclear waste at the Trawsfynydd decommissioning site. Nuclear Electric applied to move the waste to Hinkley Point in Somerset, but the campaign followed them all the way.

Hinkley Point

Green Party Area Co-ordinator Jim Duffy organised a series of public meetings and press events. On December 5th 1995 the activist team congregated at the gates of Hinkley point armed with a Busby report which calculated the number of cancers expected in West Somerset by the radioactive waste burning.

Desperate to wrest the initiative and swamp the cancer predictions, Nuclear Electric released their own headline-grabbing story, which seriously backfired on them. It was nothing less than the cancellation of Hinkley C and Sizewell B. The result was



Welsh Greens outside Trawsfynydd before its shutdown

Green Party Speaker David Taylor featured on national TV at Hinkley Point proclaiming the end of nuclear power, with the campaign team capering about in the background.

Recent events

The Low Level Radiation Team has been busy in 1996, the year of nuclear privatisation and Chernobyl's 10th anniversary, including the launch of a newsletter, *Radioactive Times*. A significant breakthrough was with the nuclear regulators, who sent senior representatives from Chilton and Harwell to our seminar on low level radiation hazards we on 24th April, 2 days before Chernobyl Day. Speakers included Busby, and Prof Ernest Sternglass from Pittsburgh, whose 1964 calculations of infant mortality effects from bomb fallout may have started it all.

Join the action

We want more Green Party members participating in the campaign, and are preparing a Greenfile about it we hope to send out shortly. Meanwhile, the 2nd issue of *Radioactive Times* featuring the health effects of Chernobyl is out. Send 50p: 38 Queen St Aberystwyth, Wales SY23 1PU

Starting fact No. 6 BSE

Who was first?

Credit should go to the Wales Green Party, who, as with French nuke tests, was ahead of the game with BSE, having launched their campaign with a booklet *BSE: The Facts*, long before the current crisis.

However, Rudolph Steiner foresaw the risks long before anyone. In a series of lectures in 1923 he stated that if cattle became meat-eaters they would go mad, beating Government scientists by over 70 years!

Rudolph Steiner was founder of the biodynamic farming movement and father of the Anthroposophical School of Radical Humanism.

Source: Kindred Spirits Summer 1996

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Fiona Regent (Secretary),
The Golden Wheel,
Liverpool L15 3HT

Working for Freedom

by Molly Scott

'Freedom' has been one of the touchstones of the Thatcherite experiment in this country. Yet when used by politicians of the Right it seems to have a very limited meaning. They will guarantee our freedom to choose which washing powder we buy, but not to choose where we walk, how we demonstrate and, most controlling of all, how we spend our time. The Job Seeker's Allowance is another block on our freedom to do what we think is valuable. It will prevent people from doing useful unpaid work protecting the environment and force them on to the mindless treadmill of job applications for non-existent or environmentally destructive jobs. A well-attended workshop at this Spring conference discussed our campaign in opposition to the JSA and came up with the idea of a conscientious objection to work, as prescribed by this consumerist economy. The ideological underpinning of this campaign will be based on the defence of individual freedom: theorists of the Right as well as the Left have argued for the basic income scheme on this ground. The campaign will revolve around:

- * A leaflet identifying jobs which people can object to on the basis of conscience (meat processing? car manufacture? financial services? pharmaceuticals? defence manufacturing? We need your help to define these).
- * Forming local groups to support or 'sponsor' people who are prepared to personally refuse to take destructive work: the group should raise money to pay the person a basic income once their benefit is refused.
- * Appeal against the withdrawal of benefit on moral grounds: take a test-case to the European Court, if necessary.
- * A leaflet called 'A Day in the Life of the Unemployed' contrasting the life of a 'job seeker' with that of a Green activist.

Perhaps people could claim membership of a religious group, the Church of Gaia, for example. This would prohibit them from any work which would damage their Goddess. Should any of this end up in court, all claimants would be eligible for Legal Aid. This campaign provides an excellent opportunity for us to publicize the Basic Income scheme, which would enable people to be free to choose how to spend their time. We can also draw attention to the many myths about work propagated by the Tories over

recent years: the myth of self-employment; the reduction in the number of unemployed; attempts to inactivate environmental activists and others opposing the state. The tragedy of this government's 'job creation' is that it fails to see the huge amount of work that is crying out to be done in the UK today. Rather than persecuting those who cannot find work we should be facilitating the lives of those who are working for the future of our country. Please respond to this article by writing to Greenlink. Ideas about morally unacceptable work would be particularly valuable.

Molly Scott Cato Aberystwyth Green Party

Events

JUNE

8 Green Futures - Gathering to share Green visions - speakers, discussions, workshops. The Arts Centre, Bridgewater 10am-4pm - lunch, bar. Free admission but book in advance - Jim Duffy, 25 Wembdon Rd, Bridgewater, Somerset 01278 422639

15 Mass demo at Faslane, home of Trident subs - organised by CND, to be largest anti-nuke demo in years. Transport being arranged from all over the country. Boat cruises around Faslane. Evening Ceilidh on the beach - Peace Camp's 14th birthday! Details call 0171 700 2393



Ostrich

There will be no tears shed from these quarters at the news of the Ostrich farming get-rich schemes that have collapsed, leaving masses of investors out of pocket. Real ostriches do not bury their heads in the sand - not true it seems of these greedy armchair investors, stupid enough to believe in the ads promising incredible returns on their investment in this disgusting exploitation of a wild animal.

The Politics of Environmental Discourse

Maarten, A. Hajer

What happens to us when we start working with a local authority on plans for Local Agenda 21? Do they listen intently to our ideas, are they persuaded and influenced by us? Or are we drawn insidiously and inevitably into a system we despise?

Anybody who has read my rude pamphlet *All We Like Sheep* will know my view on this matter. So I was glad to receive intellectual support in the form of *The Politics of Environmental Discourse*. It provides a fascinating analysis of the social and political dynamics of ecological modernisation, using the issue of acid rain as a focus. His thesis is that by engagement in the political process environmentalists are bound to lose their critical edge. When cultures collide, both must compromise. For example, you might hold on to your political position in an argument with a minister, but would you have the courage to turn up without a suit on? It is on this sort of cultural level that many battles are invisibly won and lost.

The heart of the book is a comparison between the policy making styles of two countries: the UK ('Accumulating Knowledge, Accumulating Pollution') and the Netherlands ('The Micro-Powers of Apocalypse'). It describes the way in which the two polities have progressively ignored, disparaged, accepted and absorbed the fact of environmental destruction. Their responses and the resulting policy changes are analysed in terms of psychology and sociology, as well as in practical terms. I hardly need spell out the usefulness of this kind of thinking for those of us who are now engaged in a similar discourse on ecological matters with policy makers.

Please read this book if you are now working within the political system. However much good you think you are doing, and however delighted we may all be at the positive changes brought about, it always pays to be cautious. The world is full of wolves in sheep's clothing, and we genuine sheep are not always good at spotting them.

Oxford University Press 1995
332pp £30
reviewed by Molly Scott Cato

Niki's shop, *World of Difference*, which sells a wide range of green publications and eco-products, has moved to:
14 Woburn Walk, London WC2H 9BL
0171 387 2363

Letters

Red-Green dialogue

I write as a member of the Red-Green Study Group whose pamphlet *What on Earth is to be Done? A Red-Green Dialogue* reviewed last issue.

What I liked about Steve Dawes' review was his account of his own views on how we could best bring together various perspectives, using the existing Green Party to build a coalition on the model of the German Green Party. I think most of us the Red-Green Study Group would see that as a very positive move. I was puzzled by Steve's claim that the RGSG advocates splitting the Green Movement still further, by building a Green Socialist Party. I do not find that conclusion in our pamphlet, which discusses the strengths of a range of strategic options and ways of working, arguing that it is premature to close off any of these. Red and Green dialogue can be very challenging, clarifying and strengthening - it need not be divisive. It's quite true that most RGSG members would welcome a Green Socialist Party *if, and only if*, it had a real base and was not (in Steve's words) 'a sect among sects'. But at the moment it would be exactly that, and therefore networking and coalition building are indeed better strategies.

What I found hard to take in Steve's review was his failure to say anything positive about the pamphlet or the group who produced it. It seems to me that if we want to be effective in bringing people together of different backgrounds and approaches under a common Green banner we *must* consciously notice and acknowledge what we actually share with those we disagree with, and what we see as their strengths. Otherwise how can coalitions be built? The RGSG is open to discussions of all the issues Steve raises in his review. Members do not agree

on all questions of strategy and tactics, but we are united in our advocacy of dialogue wherever there is unity that can be built on. We wrote the pamphlet as part of an ongoing discussion, without any pretensions to a final word.

Caroline New, Bristol

Uniting the Green Movement

The range of views on the left of centre in Britain is truly phenomenal. Feminists, anti-racists, trades unionists, conservationists, anarchists, socialists, animal rights, roads protesters, nationalists, left liberals, community activists, regionalists and lifestyle changes. At the moment this huge variety of radicals and progressives lend their political support to thousands of political campaigns, hundreds of pressure groups and at least a dozen political parties including Labour, Liberal Democrats, Green Party, SNP, Plaid Cymru, Liberal Party, SWP, Co-operative Party, Socialist Party, Democratic Left and the various anarchists anti-party groupings.

Two things become clear as soon as you consider the variety and diversity of the progressive movements in British politics. First is that in order to come to power in the near future the Greens will probably have to work in coalition, alliance or association with at least some of these other groups. The second is that in the near future such an alliance could not be based on the agenda of only one of the groups.

This implies that the Green Party should try and maintain its own distinctive agenda, but that individually and as a national political party we should try and work on co-operative projects with members of all these other progressive political groupings. We, the Greens, and the rest of the left of the British political spectrum agree on far too much to allow our disagreements to

hold us back.

The Red Green Study Group, Green Left Convergence and the Red Green Network are all attempts to get the Greens and the left to talk and co-operate around principles we can be happy with. I was surprised and disappointed that your last correspondent on the Green Left (Steve Dawe) was so negative about our attempts at coalition building.

Mark Hill, York Green Party and Secretary of the Red Green Network

Faslane appeal

In the shadow of imminent eviction, the current residents of Faslane Peace Camp are keen to make contact with all ex-campers who feel they would like to contribute an expression of their life here; to be published as a book, documenting the camp's 14 year history. Be it a poem, a picture, cartoon or prose, we will be extremely grateful to hear from you.

All at the camp, Faslane Peace Camp, Shandon, Helensburgh, Dumbarton-shire, Scotland

Politicians are wonderful

There are 2 statements in Green World 13 which are classic examples of the sectarianism and elitism which in my view is a major obstacle to Green Party development.

On page 10 Peter Barnett writes *"Politics seems to attract the worst possible people - self-centred, ambitious types whose only talent is verbal rhetoric"*. On page 26 an unknown writes that politicians *"have been exposed as self-serving, sleazy, arrogant, corrupt, incompetent and uncaring"*.

My half century of active politics, first as a Communist and then for 6 years as a Green totally refutes these insulting descriptions. In parliament, ever more in local councils, and active as ordinary members, the

vast bulk of politicians right across the spectrum, including, yes, Conservatives, are not in politics for the reasons quoted. They may not agree on policies or activities, but most are trying to improve the lot of fellow humans.

Fortunately other parts of Green World 13 reinforced my views. Cllr Chris Lennard's piece about his first 4 months as a councillor describes the reality well. He says that the Malvern Lib Dems *"have a strong environmental commitment, in particular to Agenda 21"*. That description fits the 2 Lib Dems on Nottingham City Council, and also a growing number of Labour Councillors. We did have at least 2 Conservatives previously who worked with me on a number of environmental issues with others beginning to move that way.

I was much taken by the interview with Charles Secrett as to the way forward for the Green Party and the wider Green Movement. He said, *"We must respect our differences and recognise that what unites us is far, far more important and prevalent than what divides us"*. That would do as a general approach in politics. The campaign for the Home Energy Conservation Bill, now an Act, and the Road Traffic Reduction Bill show immense possibilities. Let us realise them and in so doing the Green Party itself will grow and develop.

John Peck, Nottingham

Hear the rumble

Hear the rumble, hear that crash
The great trees as their strong
trunks smash.

Men get ever bolder, They're
cutting pines.

They march like soldiers, in dead
straight lines.

100 years made them tall. It takes
five minute to make them fall.

See small animals dash, crash,
bang, loudly they clash.

Stella Dawe (aged 10) Canterbury

There are Green Parties in 75 countries across six continents fighting for a common goal:

a fair and sustainable society

Part 2: Rest of the World

Inspired by the success of Green Politics in Europe, environmentalists elsewhere began to see the need to organise politically. The spread of the environmental crisis, and the improvement in computation of its scale, causes and latterly its solutions has now produced the global phenomenon of the Green politician.

Africa

In June of 1994 the most exciting recent development was the founding of the *Co-ordination des Partis Verts d'Afrique*. Based on the earlier European model of a co-ordination or network, nine mainly Francophone countries, (Benin, Burkina-Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, and Senegal) represent the greatest triumph in the evolution of Green thinking so far, for unlike in Europe, the African Greens get their support largely from rural communities, and from women voters. In Mali their first electoral outing was to contest the Presidential election, and they chose a woman candidate to carry the Green message. In Guinea-Bissau the Greens' candidate was supported by several other parties who stood down in his favour. We will be watching their progress with great affection and interest.

Early 1997 the European Federation of Green Parties (EFGP) is due host an Africa/Europe meeting in Niamey, Niger to build our relationship. At the time of writing we are watching the situation in Niger carefully, following a military coup there in January. Telecommunications are unaffected and our friends in Niamey advise us that they feel safe for the moment.

Elsewhere in Africa there's the beginning of a lively environmental movement, but not much political organisation. All in all Anglophone Africa is not famous for its well-developed democracies, with all that that says for the British colonial heritage. Even in Egypt this is not a good time to start new party, but a small Green one is biding its time.

One exciting development is a request received by the EFGP from the *African National Congress*, asking for any



by Niki Kortvelyessy

suggestions in formulating environmental policies. We are delighted to work with them and hope that the experience accumulated by Green MPs in Europe can be of help in the new South Africa.

South America

South America also shows an encouraging picture, in the face of dodgy democratic credentials, horrendous environmental problems, collapsing economies, ballooning population growth and growing contempt for human rights. Faced with all that still some are prepared to stand and fight for the future - in Brazil the Greens now have several city mayors, and local government representatives. The party in Chile is new, but growing well. In Uruguay it is more established, with several election campaigns notched up, but still struggling against a very conservative establishment. The Mexican Greens have recently won some local seats, a just reward after their long struggle for party status, working in a system which is daily seen to be more and more corrupt.

North America

Further north, the USA has long boasted of its democratic credentials.

A nation which is accustomed to electing its public officers, from judges to dog-catchers, seems incapable of breaking the stranglehold of the most rigid two-party system. In a nation where it is the norm for less than half of voters to actually vote, so low is the level of political awareness that while it is currently fashionable to despise all politicians, hardly anyone seems to point to the role of the electoral system in the failure of government. There is no Charter 88 equivalent in the USA. A tiny minority only know of the existence of proportional representation, and the recently founded Campaign for a Third Party seems to be facing insuperable odds.

Yet in a spirit that UK Greens will recognise, the US Greens struggle on, and similarly have their local triumphs to reward them. Many dozens of local election campaigns have seen Greens elected, though mainly as individuals due to a tradition of non-party contests below the State level. Only in Hawai'i have they succeeded in electing a state official, although they have come close elsewhere. Strongest state Green parties are California, Hawai'i, Alaska, New Mexico, Maine and Rhode Island, but it is estimated that there are electorally active Green Parties in 48 states - not a bad record!

It will inevitably be California where the hitherto greatest Green gamble will take place in the next few months. Since the people's hero and the Queen's cousin Colin Powell declined to run, the Republican Party is divided and the Democrats disillusioned, Perot undecided - the Greens have pulled off a coup which just may establish them on the US political scene. They have invited the consumer rights advocate and well-known scourge of the corporations Ralph Nader to contest the Californian Presidential primary on the Green Party ticket, and he has accepted and publicly launched his campaign! His candidacy has for the moment united the famously disunited east and west coast Greens, as well as brought them to the attention of a dizzyingly wide range of citizens' interest groups who should be the natural supporters of this attempt at mould-breaking. Nader is expected to address the

the Greens have seen some local successes, but elsewhere have found the odds against them too great so far.

Australia-NZ

Although in Britain we like to present ourselves as the first ever Green Party, Australia preceded us by two whole years. In 1971 the Tasmanian Greens contested their first election to focus attention on a spectacular valley which the State government was bent on drowning under a dam scheme. They lost that battle but went on to fight others, and remain the most successful of the Australian parties. They were the first Green party in the world to join a government coalition, and exercised their power by bringing down the government when the allied party (Labour) reneged on its promises.

Australia having shaken off the British electoral system, Greens have seen results for their efforts in several states. They hold seats in four of the seven state parliaments, and at the March 1996 General Election they kept their two Senators at the Federal level.

New Zealand is in the process of changing its voting system to PR following a referendum in 1993. It is a case study all British political activists would be well advised to watch carefully. As in Britain the major parties were really coalitions held together by habit and the whip system. Facing an AMS election, without exception all the parliamentary parties have fragmented into their component parts. The small Green Party had foreseen the futility of being one of a myriad tiny parties, and so joined in an electoral Alliance of five small but high-profile parties, while constitutionally keeping its own structure, policies and membership. At the time of writing, opinion polls put the Alliance second at 18%, with the governing National party running first at 20%. The general election is expected in June 1996, and the polls tell us to expect 6 Green MPs in New Zealand as part of an alliance parliamentary group of 12-16, even possible contenders for Government should there be a coalition.

Asia

This quick trawl through global Green politics shows our one gaping void: Asia. With its cultural tradition of co-operation and sense of community, so closely suited to the Green ethos, it seems strange that Asia has until now had no effective Green parties. Indeed in most countries there's no sign of any political organisation around Green issues. In Japan alone, where some very small environmentalist parties have repeatedly

contested elections with very little to show for their pains, there has at least been some activity. There have repeatedly been news of parties being set up in India, but hitherto they have all turned out to be vehicles for some individual's egotistic games.

But now there's some good news, in that the Taiwan Green Party, founded only months ago, contested the March 1996 elections and won a Congress seat! Our own Penny Kemp attended the campaign (see page 24). The state of Taiwan's environment is such that the Greens will have their hands full. Recently the news agencies carried a story of a Green Party being set up in Taiwan, and though we are investigating, it is hard to take seriously.

Considering the size and competence of the environmental NGOs in many parts of Asia, not to mention the scale of the crisis there, it is a tragedy that the Green political voice has not yet evolved there. I feel a certain sense of responsibility falls on us in Europe to seek out and encourage partners in this vital region.

My focus in this overview has been the Green Parties of our planet - I readily acknowledge that we do not hold a monopoly of either Green thought, let alone action, and that without the work of the myriad of non-party activists, the thinkers, analysts and academics, as well as the researchers, scientists and other hands-on workers, we could achieve nothing. I draw great strength from the thought that as we slog away at another campaign, all over the planet other people are doing the same and for exactly the same reasons: they too are determined to make a better future. Like the citizens of that future, we may never meet our counterparts in faraway places, but their very existence is a kind of reward.



NIKI KORTVELYESSY

Niki Kortvelyessy was International Coordinator of the Green Party 1992-1994 and is currently spokesperson for the European Federation of Green Parties.

International monitors

Green Party International Committee is looking for help to monitor international affairs. If you have some knowledge of another country, what about volunteering to be a country monitor? Listed below are the kind of things monitors do. You do not have to do all of them: every little helps! If you can help, please contact the International Coordinator Sue Miles:

* Monitor the politics, especially Green Parties through the UK national press, the press of the country and local Green Party publications;

* Write articles for Green International (newsletter of the GP International Committee and International Policy WG) and/or Green Link/Green World on:

green party election results, campaign victories, participation in coalition governments and anything else of interest;

* present emergency or topical motions to Conference on that country

* chair fringe meetings at Conference on issues concerning that country

* brief party speakers on that country and its politics

* be available to give information if a crisis occurs in that country, and the GP needs to say something well-informed about it!

Contact: Sue Miles 01491 839896

The Ladakh Project

ISEC (International Society for Ecology & Culture), with branches in Europe, USA and India, promotes ecological sustainability in the North and South. Through campaigns, videos, books, seminars and workshops ISEC reveals the social and environmental impact of globalisation and explores systemic solutions (like Local Food Links) to strengthen the local economy and community.

With 20 years of working with societies at different levels of industrialisation, the most in-depth work goes on at Ladakh, or 'Little Tibet'. 'Counter-development' seminars, theatre, comic books and 'reality-tours' highlight the unsustainability of Western consumer culture and provide ecological alternatives like renewable energy technologies and organic farming practices.

The Farm Project allows Westerners to support Ladakh life by working on farms. Their Ancient Futures book/video describes the effects of the global economy on Ladakh, whilst The Future of Progress book/video (Vandana Shiva, Martin Khor et al.) looks at the impact of development worldwide.

ISEC, 21 Victoria Square, Bristol BS8 4ES Tel 0117 973 1575 Fax 974 4853

Invitation to Vienna

The first Congress of the Federation is in Vienna on 21-23 June and everyone is invited! Like Conference, each party has delegates, but we also hope to attract lots of "observers". There is little formal business on the agenda; mainly ratification of the IGC submission.

The theme of the congress is "Green Visions of Europe in the 21st Century", emphasising it is about the whole of Europe, not just the EU. Ralph Nader, Green US presidential candidate is the keynote speaker, but most of the time is allocated to the Greens attending. There are 2 types of session: forums and workshops. Forums are totally informal: anyone can propose a topic for interested parties to gather and discuss.

Workshops will cover themes from a discussion document which taking forward ideas from the Federation's Guiding Principles. The proceedings of the congress will be a basis on which to build the next stage of European Green Politics. The Congress will be preceded by a meeting of Green councillors from all over Europe - an ideal opportunity to start up an international network of Green councillors.

It promises to be a very exciting and important event, and you are urged to attend if possible. Stall-holders are welcome. Plans to hire a coach are underway to minimise travel costs. Low cost accommodation and camping is available. Anyone interested in going, please contact me immediately. Let's show the rest of Europe that the oldest Green party is young and vibrant and full of new ideas, not to mention T-shirts!

Sue Miles

International Co-ordinator
01491 839896

Euro Greens elect Mono

In Turin last February, a Council Meeting of the Federation of European Green Parties unanimously elected Ralph Mono (Sweden) Secretary General, ending a period of uncertainty after the sudden resignation of Leo Cox in October 1994.

The meeting also passed Federation's submission on the IGC. It is a long way removed from the UK Green Party's EU policy, being much more federalist and far less critical of monetary union. Working on the document has identified the areas where Green parties have differences of opinion, and shown the variation of Green politics from country to country.

Taiwan Green elected in first democratic elections

UK Greens send an executive to help

Green Candidate Kao Mon-Ting took one of the 50 Congress seats available in Taiwan's first democratic presidential elections in April. In a referendum on a proposed nuclear power station held alongside the election the electorate voted against it.

The UK Green Party's External Communications Co-ordinator, Penny Kemp, spent the week leading up to polling day helping with the Taiwan Green Party's campaign. Her visit and support for the Taiwan Greens was widely reported in the media in Taiwan and they believe her presence contributed towards their success.

Penny travelled to Taipei, capital of Taiwan, with a statement of support from the UK Green Party calling upon the China to stop its military exercises off the coast of Taiwan during the run-up to the elections. During her visit Penny met the Mayor of Taipei County, Dr Yu Chin, who went green for the occasion. He wore a green suit and tie and gave Penny green tea to show his support for the Green's campaign against nuclear power.

The Taiwanese Green Party had formed only 2 months before the elections by Professor Koa. Kao (who was in official exile from Taiwan for 17 years) now lectures at the National Taiwan University. Together with his colleagues, he formed the Environmental Protection Union 6 years ago. Realising that social movements were making no impact on the ruling KMT party, the EPU joined with 20 other social movements to fight the first free elections in Taiwan for over 5000 years. Under the banner of the Taiwan Green Party they set about writing a manifesto for change. It concentrated on the need for sustainable economics, women's and children's rights (child prostitution is rife in Taiwan) and the abolition of nuclear weapons and power. It is a party of peace, social justice and ecology.

The election was rotten with corruption including vote buying and political bias on an appalling scale. Despite this the Greens won their seat in the parliament, with an overall average of 6%. They stood in 13 of the 50 seats up



PENNY KEMP

for election. Their candidates were human rights workers, academics, social workers, an aborigine and a disabled candidate.

Taiwan is a country of paradoxes - 4 billion pounds was spent by the ruling KMT (Kuomintang) party on the election, yet the environmental degradation of the south island is horrifying. China paint plants, coal works and factories churn out smoke from low chimneys and the stench of sulphur mixed with nitrous oxide leaves a yellow blanket of cloud permanently hanging over Kaohsiung. Taiwan's second largest town. Vegetation is covered in a grey/black coating of filth and the once proud upright palms hang limp and sad.

But the future looks brighter. Environmental concern is growing - the fact that the people voted against a new nuclear power station gives hope for the future. The Greens have made it quite clear they are not going away and have already started to plan for the next election.



CONCERNED ABOUT ANIMAL EXPLOITATION?



If you are concerned about factory farming, the fur trade, vivisection, the slaughter of thousands of seals in the United Kingdom, cruelty to pets, bloodsports, over fishing, intensive aquaculture, circuses, zoos and all other forms of animal neglect, cruelty, abuse and exploitation then please contact us today for your free information pack. Your voice is needed for those with no voice of their own and no freedom but death.



ANIMAL CONCERN,
FREEPOST, GLASGOW G3 8BR.



Vote Ralph Nader for President!

US Greens' potential Presidential candidate has real prospects

by Paul Anderson

It is no longer 'Morning in America', if it ever was. Ronald Reagan's electoral rhetoric now seems an age away to an America battered by recession, job insecurity, poverty, environmental degradation and racial tensions. The political system is held in utter contempt. It is in this environment that the Green Parties of USA are actively launching their first potential presidential campaign.

The 1st-past-the-post, 2 party system, the Washington politico-media circus, big money lobbying and negative attack campaigns have all fed this public contempt for politics and government. "Politics in the U.S. is very simplistic," says Mike Feinstein of the Californian Green Party. "The problem is in part that people feel so disengaged. They are raised on media 'events', trends are never discussed. They are frustrated and looking to a Perot or Colin Powell to replace the top."

The turn-out for elections is falling steadily, reflecting the feeling of frustration and disillusionment with the system. As the Republican party lurches rightwards, under pressure from Pat Buchanan's Christian fundamentalist wing and minimalists like Newt Gingrich, the Democrats are responding by following suit. The progressive, left-of-centre who once were Democrats have been left gaping and distinctly under represented.

Third party graveyard

In this febrile atmosphere the Greens have launched their small campaign ship, and are on the brink of running a candidate for U.S. President. In the all-important Californian primary election they fielded a credible candidate, the consumer rights advocate and leading liberal, Ralph Nader. It is a long and rocky road from the initial primary elections (where parties determine which of their candidates will stand) to a full-blown Presidential bid, but Greens are buoyed by European parties' successes, particular Die Grünen.

Their hopes are tempered, however, by the complete failure of third-parties in recent history. Who has heard of the Libertarians, Taxpayers or New Alliance? Third-parties are quickly marginalised as losers, burnt themselves out too quickly, or get sucked back into the mainstream. The major problem is, of course, the lack of any PR system. Strangely, the Republican Party itself gives hope. They were founded as a third-party in 1854 to

oppose the extension of slavery. "The key to success in this scenario seems to be the existence of a vital, emotionally-involving unresolved national issue in which both of the major parties are advocating relatively similar policy positions," explains Californian Green Greg Jan. The Greens might base their electoral bid on parallel lines, using the twin themes of the environment, and the turning of government against the little guy by big corporations, as their emotional issues. The latter theme certainly helped Ross Perot to a 19% vote in the last Presidential election - the highest third-party vote ever.

In this slowly collapsing system the Greens have all to play for. They have come a long way in the 10 years since the party was founded at a Minnesota meeting of 200 activists. They have faced



RALPH NADER

difficulties familiar to European Greens: at the first national meeting in 1987 open warfare broke out between the Deep Ecologists and the Social Ecologists. Despite this, by 1989 there were 250 local groups in 35 regions and the beginnings of a national program. In Colorado in 1990 a national structure was set up, spokespeople appointed and state-wide legal entities incorporated. In the Spring of 1991, in the wake of the Exxon Valdez, a Green was elected in Alaska.

The great hurdle for small parties is achieving "ballot status". To get your party on the ballot you need thousands of voters to register themselves as potential supporters. In 1992 the Californian Greens needed a mammoth 78,992 registrations for ballot status; they got over 100,000. In the 1992 elections Green voting in

Hawaii, Arizona and New Mexico was big media news with 92 candidates in 16 states. The 75 candidates in 1994 polled 1.1 million votes; 13 were elected. In Hawaii, Keiko Bok-Abrahamson took a seat on the Island council with a 60% mandate.

There are huge debates over the wisdom of a non-electoral strategy (building the party up slowly by education and concentrating on registering people as voters), compared to running as many candidates as possible at all levels. This is where the debate on a Green Presidential candidate comes in. By August they must decide whether to run a full blown Presidential campaign. Is worth the cost to their political resources? The stakes are high: a 5% vote would net the party \$4million in Government funding for their next convention. The problems are familiar ones; organisation, person power, money and, peculiar to America, the careful choice of candidate. To make a legitimate first run in such a large country, a big 'name' candidate is essential. So far, Nader, is the only contender. And what of Nader? In late March, Nader polled 20,571 votes in the Californian Primary - the largest 3rd party result - but it was a record low turnout at 38%. He is now being selected by US Green Parties across the country.

Big things are expected of him. "Nader's personal integrity and lifetime of public service and advocacy has made him one of the most trusted public figures in the U.S.," says Feinstein. Nader has huge credibility in America and does not want to squander it. His original intention, when accepting a request to stand on the Californian ballot, was simply to wake up grassroots activism and help the Greens' ballot access drive. He would not say, in advance, whether he would actually run for President after the primaries. It all depends on whether there is a wide enough grassroots movement for him to run.

A concern of many Greens (and Democrats!) is the nightmare of allowing a Republican in by taking too many votes from Clinton. Nader's response to this "spoiler" question is blunt: "What's to spoil? The system's rotten. It's time for something new."

Americans are angry, frustrated and hurting, and established Government is their target. If Nader or Perot can make cracks in the mould, the Greens might be the eventual winners, with a serious run in the hugely symbolic millennium year 2000. It never was morning for most Americans, but maybe there are the first glimmers of a different kind of dawn.

Greens gain 6 new Councillors

Summary

The Green Party won 6 new seats (including the Oxford County Council By-election) and lost one. We did quite well overall polling on average over 5% of the vote where we stood.

We are gradually increasing our average vote (up from 3.8% in the equivalent 1992 locals) getting many more results in the 5-10% range compared to the 0-5% range. Our target wards are doing well - the base of winnable seats is expanding as the *Targeting to Win* programme begins to bear fruit.

It shows once more that with proper targeting, including hard work all year round, Greens can and do win. Our efforts are even starting to be taken seriously again by the media.

The bad news? We are not growing as fast as we might and not winning where it is eminently possible to do so (which is wherever we have good active parties).

John Spottiswoode
Elections Co-ordinator

OXFORD

Liberal Democrat leader and Labour Sheriff beaten

Years of solid campaigning and building support reaped dividends for Oxford Green Party. Boosted by a by-election victory 2 weeks earlier (see page 4), the Greens defeated the Liberal Democrat leader and the Council Sheriff, a Labour Councillor for 17 years.

The two new Green Councillors, Paul Ingrams and Xanthe Bevis, join Mike Woodin to establish a solid Green Group on the City Council. Both wards were in the city centre. Green candidates in 4 nearby wards all came 2nd place polling 22-25% of the vote. As usual, the Greens fielded a full slate of candidates, and their overall share of the vote, 15%, placed them tantalisingly close to the Tories (18%) and Lib Dems (20%). They are well on the way to becoming the second placed party in Oxford after Labour, who polled 46%.

Dirty Tricks

As victims of Lib Dem dirty tricks on many previous occasions, it came as no surprise to the Greens when an eye of poll leaflet, printed on green paper, imitating Green Party typography, accused them of being against traffic reduction and wanting to ban cycling in the city! How the Lib Dems could believe that voters would swallow such ludicrous lies is beyond belief.

In the event, they lost their leader to Paul Ingrams, who polled 39.5%, while Xanthe Bevis did even better polling 44% to oust the Labour incumbent.

Meanwhile, the Tories were totally wiped out losing their four remaining seats, leaving the Council still firmly under Labour control, but with the City Centre getting greener by the minute.

BRIGHTON

Old rejects New Labour for Green

In its first elections as a Unitary Authority, Brighton & Hove's entire council was being contested (78 seats). The Green Party fielded one candidate in each ward, and three in its target ward, where Pete West sensationally topped the poll to be elected with two Labour candidates. He becomes the Green Party's first English Unitary Councillor.

In other wards the Green result was well up, coming second in one, and third in several others. The new council comprises Labour 54, Tory 23 and Greens 1. The Liberal Democrats were wiped out losing all 3 of their seats.

Pete West won in a Labour stronghold, consisting of students, ex-students, working class and more affluent 'intellectual' Labour voters. A local traffic issue dominated the election. A scheme in which the ward would become a rat run was fiercely opposed by residents, whose petition containing thousands of signatures was snubbed by the existing Labour councillors. Realising the Green threat at the last minute, Labour distributed a spoiler leaflet claiming the local Greens opposed Park & Ride (a lie) but to no avail. Canvass returns indicated that even the 220 Labour Party members in the ward voted Green! Pete West said:

"These are 'Old' Labour supporters, who are wholly disillusioned with their 'New' Labour councillors, who have been selling off public land to the private sector and generally ignoring their needs." He added *"Our success was not just Labour's shortcomings - the electorate clearly approved of our social policies. Brighton has many acute problems, like severe homelessness, and the Green Party capitalised on New Labour's rightward shift. No one else is doing this."*

The Brighton Greens now intend to get a permanent office, and produce a much improved Green newspaper to spread the Green message and build up more support.

STROUD

Stroud victory marred by lost seat

Gwen Belcher won a new seat for the Green Party on Stroud Council, but the party failed to hold on to an existing sea occupied by Sue Nicholson. After 8 years on the Council, Sue decided to stand down, and there was not enough time to build up the profile of her replacement. Unfortunately the electorate had been seduced by New Labour, but the Greens are confident of winning it back next time, together with another seat they came close taking this time.

Gwen's success keeps the Green's compliment on the council at four - still the greenest council in the country!

KIRKLESS

Labour trounced in metropolis

After narrowly losing to Labour last year, Nick Harvey's tireless efforts finally secured him a famous victory as he became the Green Party's first Metropolitan councillor.

Like other Green candidates seriously challenging the main parties, he has been the object of dirty tricks. Labour have been conducting a sustained campaign against him for some time, including the

distribution of leaflets actually identifying him personally, which were full of lies and distortion. But Nick and his local Green Party's record spoke for itself, and he romped home with a huge majority, 3,000 votes to Labour's 1,525.

Nick said: *"I fought an honest campaign and I won. I am delighted that the people of Newsome have put their faith in me and I will not let them down."*

Campaigns Community

Local Parties can apply to the Campaigns Committee for assistance with their campaigns. Small monies and help with DTP and publicity available. Also, Nic Best (Local Party Support) is compiling a database of on-going campaigns around the country. Send your details to him. **Chloe Wilson, Campaigns Co-ordinator, 3 Cottage Green, London SE5 7ST**

Local Agenda 21

The Green Party's official Local Agenda 21 Campaign was launched at the Dover Conference. Its focus (to begin with at least) is to be threefold:

1. To provide information which empowers local party members;
2. For local party members to encourage the national bodies of ANY local organisations they belong to or are involved in (environmental, social, sports etc.) to develop LA21 policies and guidelines for their members - because all sectors of the community are expected to get involved - and not just by working to the local council's agenda, but with initiatives of their own;
3. To network (and perhaps even co-ordinate) examples of good ideas, practices and successes (so the others can 'plagiarise them' and avoid reinventing the wheels for this TROJAN HORSE).

To contribute or get on the mailing list contact: Vera Elliott, Flat 3, 16 Royal Esplanade, Margate, Kent CT9 5DX

Job Seekers Allowance

The JSA is to be introduced in October and is likely to have an enormous impact upon many of us. It is vital we raise awareness of the issues surrounding it as soon as possible. We are producing a leaflet which will be suitable for distribution at DSS offices and job centres, as well as being useful for activists. In addition to detailing who will be affected and how, there will also be information on the Green Party's answer to this madness - the Basic Income Scheme.

Contact: Shane Collins, 73 Brailsford Road, London SW2 2TB
Email: shane@gn.apc.org

BSE

The Welsh Green Party have been running a BSE campaign for some time, and have campaigning materials available including a booklet BSE: The Facts, stickers and leaflets.

Contact: 38 Queens Street, Aberystwyth SY23 1PU 01970 611226



Uta Bellion
Campaigns Director FoE
Friends of the Earth

Chloe Wilson
Campaigns Co-ordinator
Green Party

Jenny Jones
Chair
Green Party

Recruitment Campaign

This campaign is being jointly run by Nic Best, Local Party Support Co-ordinator and Campaigns, in co-operation with ECOTRIP. The main aim of the campaign will be to encourage green contacts within universities to set up parties and keep links with their local parties. If you have any green contacts within universities, or advice to offer, please contact Nic Best.

ECOTRIP, a mobile DIY cultural and

environmental space, will be touring festivals and fairs this summer, and universities from October. If you want to book ECOTRIP, or find out more about them, contact Steve Peake. Student orientated materials are now in production - test runs available from Steve.

Contacts:

Nic Best, 24 Northborne Avenue, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 1JG 01670 517915

Steve Peake, 59a Uplands Rd, London N6 9NH 0181 341 3794

GREENS SUPPORT MANIFESTO FOR REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

from Nic Best

Jan Clark, Speaker for the Green Party, shared a platform with Labour MP, Dave Clelland, and a Lib Dem Councillor to support the launch of the Campaign for a Northern Assembly's (CNA) Manifesto "Democracy and Progress".

The Campaign is arguing for a regional assembly for Northern England (everywhere between Yorkshire and Lancashire and the Scottish borders). It points out that the present government has effectively created the bureaucracy for regional government through bodies such as the regional Government Offices, the Regional Health Trusts, regional Arts Trusts, and most recently the Regional Environmental Protection Agencies. However these are currently all run by democratically unaccountable Quangos, creating a "democratic deficit". An elected Assembly could take over regional government without any significant increase in bureaucracy or taxation. The Campaign favours election by the AMS-PR system, on the model already chosen for the promised Scottish Parliament. The Scottish choice was of course influenced by the Scottish Green Party's role in the

Constitutional Convention. Jan's particular message highlighted the popular disillusionment with conventional politics, the roots of which lie in the feeling of powerlessness experienced by ordinary people. Women, and also young people, are effectively excluded from politics by current political practices, suffering a real "democratic deficit", and we need to move towards a more co-operative, less confrontational form of politics. She welcomed the cross-party support for the Campaign, and hoped that it would bring political decision-making power closer to local communities.

The only real hope for English Regional Government in the near future lies with a Labour Government, but at present the best the national Labour Party are offering are "Regional Chambers" made up from Councillors nominated from the District Councils.

Copies of the CNA Manifesto are available from Wendy Ross, 184 Simonside Terrace, Heaton, Newcastle NE 6 5 LA at £1 plus p&p. Information about the Green Party's role in the campaign is available from Mike Greveson, Wansbeck House, Dogger Bank, Morpeth, Northumberland NE 61 1 RE

Green Party Spring Conference

Dover Town Hall 22-25 February 1996

Live exports demo

The Green Party joined forces with the Animal Rights movement in a march against live exports at this year's Spring Conference. Thousands of protesters were expected from all over the country but inclement weather caused several coaches to be cancelled. However, with nearly 500 marchers, it was still an impressive spectacle and achieved good media coverage.

At the rear of the march, a cattle truck filled with protesters followed the procession through the town right up to the docks. Numbers were further swelled by a contingent of the Kent Constabulary, whilst a couple of the now ever-present Special Branch video surveillance units filmed the entire event for future reference! There were no arrests.

Speeches were delivered at the beginning and end of the march and speakers included Mark Watts MEP, David Taylor (Green Party), Peter Stevenson (Compassion in World Farming) and Zack Phipps. David Taylor said:

"When we come into contact with animals, we see them as sentient beings, much like us, and in their own way as much in need of warmth, comfort and companionship. There is a division in politics, between those who regard everything in terms of its value to human beings and those who believe that life itself, regardless of human beings, has an intrinsic inherent value.

And this is where we, as Greens, are shaping new politics. The starting point of our politics is the understanding that we are part of nature, and that everything is connected. What we do to one part of the web of life we do to all life. Everything is connected. Ecological consciousness."

We give thanks to Chris Holian and Phil Challans of the Kent Association of Green Parties, who organised the event, and to all the organisations and individuals who turned up to support it.



Organisers Chris Holian & Phil Challans leading the march with David Taylor (far left)

Highlights

The ornate, mediaeval Town Hall of Dover provided an ideal venue for a well attended and lively conference, where delegates were treated to an exceptionally wide variety of events and activities in addition to the usual policy making process. At the opening session David Taylor introduced the main theme of the conference - coalition building. Guests from right across the spectrum of the Green movement featured in panel discussions and debates around the themes of environmental rights, social justice, democratic renewal, animal rights and development issues.

Other highlights included Peter Lang's ultra popular 'Question Time', a presentation by children from the creche calling for a "Children Against Nestle", and a mock Additional Members System PR election where conference divided into four parties. Each chose a party list, divided into 4 constituencies and each voted for a constituency representative and a party for whom they wished additional members. After the exercise, Elections Co-ordinator John Spottiswoode said "that is what our current policy commits us to. If you don't like it I expect to see motions at the next conference".

The best entertainment spot had to be from Justice?, (the anarchic mob from Brighton), who debuted their Schlive! show. The combination of news stories and video clips was gratuitous satire at its best.

Party Speakers Peg Alexander and David Taylor both gave outstanding key note speeches.

Congratulations are due to our tireless Conference Co-ordinator Miriam Kennet for organising yet another excellent conference, and thanks to all her team for their selfless efforts. This conference lived up to its claim as Britain's premier gathering of Green activists. Attendees went home feeling invigorated and equipped for the task ahead.

Don't miss the next one - the Green Party Autumn Conference at Hastings 18-22 September 1996.



Cattle truck filled with protesters following up the rear of the march

Costing Basic Income

Detailed proposals for reforming the tax and benefit system began to take shape at a workshop on "Costing the Basic Income". A Basic Income equivalent to present Income Support, plus a regionally varied Housing Allowance, would require 11% more of GNP to be redistributed through the tax system than at present. This could be provided by taxing earned income over £14,000 at 48% and over £70,000 at 60%, so that most people would need to earn over £25,000 before being worse off. Similar rates would apply to Corporation Tax. The Cambridge Microsimulations Group will model these proposals and the results will be presented to a future conference.

Policy making

Draft Voting Papers on marine policy, industry and the built environment were submitted, and an Enabling Motion on Monetary Policy. New policy was passed to curb light pollution in the countryside and restrict advertising aimed at children, and policy against building new roads was strengthened. A motion was passed calling for the National Lottery to be abolished because it involved "state control of the voluntary sector."

Topical and Emergency Motions which were passed are summarised on the right (full text versions are available from SOC). A Constitutional Review Group is to be set up.

For full details of all the business conducted, correlate the information following with the conference's Final Agenda, available from Party Office.

Record of Conference

Motions carried

Section A 1,2,3
Section B 1 (+ amndts 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8)
Section C 1,2,3,6,7(+ amndt 8),8,9,10,12
Section D 4,5 (with amndt),7,8,9,12

Not carried

C4,5,11 and D1,2,3,6,13
Motions D10 & 11 were referred back to the Autumn Conference, on the understanding they will be prioritised by SOC.

Internal elections

Standing Orders Committee: Maggie Morrissey, Alan Paxton
Mediation Committee: Janet Alty
Campaigns Committee: Peter Merry, Chris Busby, Shane Collins, Vera Elliott, Ruth Whiteside



Jim Wallace attempts to sell Green World to Special Branch video surveillance unit (unsuccessfully)

Topical motions

Arms sales (see pg 7)

Condemns British Government's attempts to force arms on Slovenia in return for support for entry into EU and NATO.

Sea Empress disaster at Milford Haven
Deplores authorities' complacency re: transport and handling of oil in coastal waters. Demands Public inquiry, to include questions:

1. Why was St Ann's Head Radar inoperative and why wasn't it replaced after 10 yr lifespan? Was this a factor in accident?
2. Why were there no properly equipped salvage tugs locally available?
3. What is the economic damage to area's attractions dependent on wildlife?
4. Jobs losses caused by disaster compared to jobs provided by oil industry in the area?

Nestle

Condemns Nestle's aggressive promotion of formula baby milk in poor countries, breaking World Health Organisation and Unicef codes and calls for Green Party boycott campaign with a focus on children's products.

Waste incineration

Deplores promotion of incineration as a sustainable solution to waste disposal. Incineration encourages waste generation; destroys valuable compostable and recyclable resources, produces atmospheric pollution including dioxins, greenhouse gases and toxic landfill material; generates traffic. Sustainable alternatives are low tech, low impact and avoid exposure to accumulative toxic substances.

Emergency motions

Scott Report

Government should accept conclusions of Report. Deplores that British 'dual use' equipment was secretly supplied to Iraq and used to manufacture munitions. Supports principle of ministerial responsibility and urges all MPs to withhold co-operation with Government if Waldegrave and Lyell don't resign. *Nota Bene: It is Green Party policy to phase out the export of British arms.*

Immigration & Asylum Bill

Condemns new Asylum and Immigration Bill which shows complete disregard for

humanitarian principles and Human Rights Conventions to asylum seekers in fear of persecution and death. Thousands will have no means of support if denied leave to appeal against deportation and withdrawal of relief.

Bosnia

Conference notes' desperate need to rebuild a civic society void of ethnic hatred to secure peace in Bosnia; the grant of Right Livelihood Award to Serb Civic Council for their refusal to succumb to ethnic hatred; Serbs who have concealed Muslims in Serb-occupied territory at great personal risk.

Asks Green Group in the European Parliament to petition the EP to fund Bosnian Government to establish civic bravery award to honour all who've shown special courage helping others escape ethnic persecution.

Northern Ireland

Expresses dismay and revulsion at the resumption of IRA bombing. Extends sympathy to the victims. Renewed commitment to promoting peace is best we can offer to them, and all affected.

Regrets British Government failed by extended delays to enter into all-party talks including Sinn Fein. As a first step, seeks clear commitment by all parties in Parliament that Government enters into talks based on Mitchell recommendations.

Encouraged by commitment of members of both communities in N. Ireland to peace, and the many positive initiatives at local level. Regrets little done to empower people to assert that commitment. Green Parties of Britain and Ireland consistently argued that peace process must extend and empower throughout communities concerned, not just to politicians. Such a broadly based peace process would discourage return to violence and strengthen commitment to the process.

Suggests a diplomatically speedy move to talks, (if initially on proximity basis where some parties negotiate indirectly), would give best context to launch and build broadly based peace process, a prerequisite for any prospect of disarmament and dissolution of paramilitary groups. That prospect can only be realised by gradual building of trust through involvement in broad peace process, not by vainly demanding disarmament pre-conditions.



Policy Review Survey

Green Party members are encouraged to participate in a review on how we develop and use policy. Full details from:
Joe Otten, 23 Ramsey Road, Crooks, Sheffield, S10 1LR Tel 01142 660923

Cricket Club

The cricket season is now in full swing and that means Green Party members are putting leather to willow. Most fixtures are Dulwich/Surrey based including the BBC, Kings College and London Touring Theatres. Games are played on Sunday and there are vacancies for teams to challenge the might of the Green Party.

You can get a fixture card by phoning
Roger Baker on 0171 733 0814.

Green Party Conference

18-22 September 1996
Hastings

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AUTUMN CONFERENCE & AGM

18-22 September 1996
Hastings

First Agenda

First Agenda Motions Deadline 6th June

Motions for the conference should be sent to the Convenor of Standing Orders Committee (SOC), Matthew Paterson (address below), to arrive by Thursday 6th June. Motions must be signed by four party members. No Party member may sign more than four motions. Motions must be accompanied by a synopsis of 50 words, or 300 words for a Voting Paper. We would greatly appreciate motions being sent accompanied with a disk, or being sent by e-mail as well as paper, as this significantly eases compilation of the Agenda.

N.B. The next issue of Green World will appear after the deadline for amendments to motions in the First Agenda. Members wishing to see it in time to submit amendments should get a copy from Party Office or their Local Party Contact.

The First Agenda will be sent with Green Link and will be available to members from Party Office in late June. Amendments to motions should then be submitted to the SOC Convenor by 25th July. The Final Agenda will be available from 22 August. Motions, amendments, and any other SOC correspondence should be sent to: **Matthew Paterson**, 114 Stanier Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs, ST5 2SU. Tel: 01782 620599 e-mail: ira13@ir.keele.ac.uk.

Green Party Executive elections

Call for Nominations

Nomination packs for the annual postal ballot for the Green Party Executive (GPEx) positions are now available from Party Office. (For GPEx positions see Network - page 31). Write to: The Green Party LA Waterlow Road, London N19 5NJ requesting Executive Elections Nomination Pack. **NOTE:** Closing date for receipt of nominations is 20th July 1996. Ballot papers and candidates' supporting statements will be distributed to members in Green Week 15 at the end of August. There will be hustings for all the positions at Autumn Conference. The ballot closes one week after Conference.

Committees elections

There will be elections at Conference for members of Standing Orders Committee, Policy Committee, Campaigns Committee, Mediation Committee, and the Green World Editorial Board. Nominations should be sent to: **The Returning Officer, Malcolm Howe, 32 Passey Crescent, Benson, Oxon OX10 6LD**

Timetable

June 6	1st Agenda motions deadline
July 1	Greenlink with 1st Agenda
Jul 20	GPEX nominations deadline
July 25	Final Agenda amendments deadline
Aug 22	Final Agenda published
Sep 1	Green World 15 with GPEX ballots
Sep 18-22	AGM & Autumn Conference

Use your speakers

Peg Alexander and David Taylor want to remind local parties that we are available and keen to come and talk to your local party. See network page opposite for contact details.

Animal Rights Policy Working Group revived

Following a fringe meeting at the Dover Conference, the Animal Rights Policy Working Group was reactivated. The new national contacts are Chris Holian and Phil Challans. The ARPWG's Animal Rights magazine *Green Ark* is to resume, subs £4 a year from the address below.

An 'animal monitoring scheme' is being set up. Members and Local Parties are asked to find out what's happening in their area. Do your Local Authorities have



Green Party

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Green Conference Hastings

White Rock Theatre

18-22nd September 1996



*Organisations and individuals are warmly invited.
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anti-roads
nuclear/peace
Criminal Justice Act
Coalition debates

health - food - BSE
Green politics
human rights
development & trade
African night
lively & open debates

stalls, healing, crafts, videos, bands, workshops, debates, panels, meditation

New feature: Wednesday roundtable discussions

Policy debates:

genetic engineering, marine, education

Workshops: Martha Brett, 115 Greyhound Rd,
London N17

AGM

Matthew Paterson 01782 620599

Healing area

Healers contact Jude 01458 850971

Spiritual space

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Green Conference booking form

White Rock Theatre Hastings

18-22 September 1996



Miriam Kennet
Conference Co-ordinator

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conference and
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and much, much more!



CONFERENCE FEES - Daily rate

Income guide	If booked before 04.09.96			Booked at Conference		
	Thu/Fri/Sat	Sun	All in	Thu/Fri/Sat	Sun	All in
under £5,000	5	3	15	6	3	20
£5K - 9,999	8	4	18	7	4	22
£10K - 14,999	9	7	27	10	8	31
£15K - 19,999	13	10	30	15	11	45
£20K - 29,999	17	13	51	19	15	58
£30K - 39,999	21	18	63	24	18	73
over £40,000	29	20	78	30	23	91

Volunteers

If you would like to help please contact the relevant organiser below
Certain jobs offer specific reduced fees - details from Miriam Kennet

CONFERENCE CO-ORDINATOR Miriam Kennet, 6 Strachey Close,
Tidmarsh, Reading RG8 8EP 01734 845225

CHAIRING Jennifer Kaye 01928 332965

WELCOME & BOOKINGS Jill Harvey 0121 453 5838

PRESS OFFICE Penny Kemp 01622 890601

CRECHE Lisa Noble 01424 439801

ENTERTAINMENT Steve Muggenridge 01622 813413

STALLS & COACH to Conference Branda 01484 533451

FRINGE MEETINGS Miriam Kennet (see above) - book before 12 August

POLICY WORKSHOPS Martha Brett, 115 Grayhound Rd, London N17

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE Matthew Paterson 01782 820599

RETURNING OFFICER Malcolm Howe 01865 724871

LOCAL TEAM Lorraine Serrecchia 01273 478353

CONFERENCE GUIDE Contributions Peter Barnett 01252 330506
Advertising Jon Rose 01865 623528 Mike Boulton 01781 439881

Accommodation

20 floor spaces at £2 per night in the Hastings Friends Meeting House. 30
beds £5 night - 1st booked 1st served then 50 mattresses £5 per night in
YMCA. Please use this form to book. For alternative accommodation needs
tick boxes right.

Creche facilities

Creche provided for 20 Green Party member's children only. PLACES MUST
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FOR IN ADVANCE BY 4th SEPTEMBER, WITH REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT OF
£2.50 PER DAY/PER CHILD.

BOOKING FORM

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Address _____

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Tel (home) _____ (work) _____ Local Party _____

Days attending and fees payable (see left)

Wednesday doors open 11 am	YMCA	FMH floor
Thursday £ _____	YMCA	FMH floor
Friday £ _____	YMCA	FMH floor
Saturday £ _____	YMCA	FMH floor
Sunday £ _____		
Floorspace £ _____	£2 per night (bed/mats £5)	
Creche deposit £ _____	£2.50 per child per day returnable	
TOTAL £ _____		

Cheque made payable to The Green Party enclosed YES/NO

Coach/Car sharing:

- ☐ I can offer _____ spaces in my car to/from Conference
- ☐ I would like a lift to/from Conference and will help with the cost
- ☐ I would use a coach if provided

Attendance status: ☐ Local Party rep ☐ Member
☐ Non-member ☐ Organisation

I require the following information:

Accommodation brochure ☐
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AUTUMN 1996

No. 15

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UNEMPLOYMENT

editorial

There was a time when I was a member of so many pressure groups and charities that hardly a week went by without a membership renewal reminder arriving in the post. It cost a fortune, but I had to satiate my desire to support all these worthy causes and vital issues. They covered the environment, animal and human rights, social justice, peace/nuclear, racism and civil liberties. What a relief it was when I found an organisation which championed all these causes and many more besides.

The Green Party embraces them all, integrating them into a coherent blueprint for a fair and sustainable society. Equally importantly, it addresses the root causes of the problems, not just the symptoms, and recognises that real and lasting change must ultimately be achieved by entering and transforming the political process. This is not to belittle the other organisations, who play a vital role in raising awareness of the issues, delaying destruction, reducing abuse, researching and dissemination information, and so on. We all should support them as much as possible, including via coalitions and personal membership.

But we need to convince the vast numbers of people belonging to these organisations and others active in the wider green movement that in addition they should join the Green Party. The resultant combined force of knowledge, experience, leadership, energy and resources would wield an influence far in excess of the fragmented movement as it is. The party would be able to field candidates in every ward in the country during local elections, and contest every constituency at General Elections. This would guarantee putting the 'real' issues onto the agenda. The entire population would be properly exposed to the powerful logic and compulsive appeal of green policies. The resultant pressure for change would be unstoppable. As the madness and destructive nature of conventional politics not only became transparently obvious, but with a credible Green force in existence, people would at last lose their sense of hopelessness that nothing can be done, and feel empowered enough to take action.

Our struggle for a just and sustainable society, whether through direct action, political lobbying, demonstrating, boycotting or whatever, continues to be an uphill battle. The forces pitted against us, the industrial, financial and political institutions, who also control the media and security forces, are relatively comfortable in the belief that we can never pull together sufficiently to seriously challenge them. They have successfully pushed green issues back into the sidelines, knowing full well that public concern about such things remains persistently strong, and needs to be contained. But the recent groundswell of dissent in the 1990s from numerous sources has jolted their confidence, evident from the introduction of increasingly repressive laws, and new attempts to divide and disrupt certain particularly successful organisations.

But let's *really* give them something to worry about, by challenging their very positions of power and influence using their own corrupt and self-serving political system. The Green Party, reflecting the views of almost all the diverse array of organisations in the Green Movement, is the idea vehicle to do it. But it must have more concrete support from all greens to move forward. I urge you, one and all, to join up today, and help create a force to be reckoned with.

Peter Barnett Editor



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The Empire strikes back Divide and destroy campaign

Following the massive street party in which 10,000 people shut down the M41, organisers Reclaim The Streets have been under attack. As CND, the Green Party and others have learnt from bitter experience, start becoming too successful and the vested interests will move against you.

The police, beaten on the day by sheer force of numbers have responded to the growing support for RTS-type actions with intimidation and victimisation. The RTS office was raided and a computer confiscated. An RTS activist was arrested and told he could face the sinister charge of 'conspiracy to commit criminal damage' in connection to the street party.

Another side of the backlash appeared in the London Evening Standard, in a despicable if predictable attempt to smear RTS and split the movement. Claiming the group was being taken over by a 'lunatic fringe', a two page spread began: 'The anti-roads campaign Reclaim the Streets is in danger of being hijacked by anarchist lawbreakers, transport campaigners warned yesterday', with The Green Party, Transport 2000 and the London Cycling Campaign all lining up to condemn the highly successful and popular occupation.

Except of course, none of them did.

Far from condemning the event, Green Party activists helped organise it, and their mobile cultural and environmental experience, Ecotrip, was there all day feeding the hungry revellers with veggieburgers.

Lynn Sloman of Transport 2000, 'quoted' in the piece responded, 'It's just outrageous, a complete misrepresentation. We didn't condemn the protest at all', whilst the LCC's reaction was that 'non violent direct action plays a major role in highlighting problems'.

Misinformation, getting groups to condemn one another (or in this case inventing it), encouraging splits ('anarchist lawbreakers' against ordinary, decent 'transport campaigners') are well-worn tactics when it comes to trying to portray successful, growing campaigns as bickering, ineffective groups. It's a clear indication that we've got them well and truly rattled.

However, with millions of readers, the press can influence would-be supporters with this sort of thing, and we must issue and disseminate rebuttals as widely as possible to counteract the lies.

Source: SCHNEWS

Council admits short lived benefits of Newbury bypass and considers building yet another

Berkshire County Council's Newbury Transport Strategy reveals that even with traffic management, the benefits of the £100m Newbury bypass will be wiped out within 8 years. The transport plan admits that even if its 'challenging' target is achieved, 'traffic conditions on the existing A34 in 2006 would return to the current position'. The Green Party again called upon the Government to abandon wasting this vast sum of money on such a short term measure.

The plan further revealed that the Council has seriously considered building a third bypass to the West of Newbury to deal with additional traffic. If the 700+ planning applications for development along the route of the current bypass are all approved then heaven help the people of Newbury.

The battle resumes

Round 2 in the 3rd Battle of Newbury has begun. Costain have been given the contract to build the road, protected by American union busting security company Pinkertons. You are needed there now to join the protesters. Call 01635 45544 or info line 01635 550552

(Lib Dem lies - see page 16)

Street Party

July 13th RTS street party on the M41 motorway

Up to 10,000 people spent 8 hours dancing, partying and peacefully protesting against the car culture. At first it was touch and go whether the police, who were waiting in the vicinity of the 'secret' venue, would succeed in preventing the action. At one end the police blocked off the entrance to the M41 roundabout, as crowds of people began arriving. Unsure if this was the actual site, they began partying. At the other end of the road the RTS blockade crew decided to go for it, and avoiding police spotters made it onto the road. Two cars were theatrically crashed and 3 tripods erected to block the southern carriageway. But the two sound system vehicles were surrounded by police, who dragged out the occupants, quick-cuffed them, and assumed they had stopped the party.

But they underestimated the creativity and determination of the crowd, who on hearing the road had been taken looked for alternative ways onto it. Before long swarms of people had found a way, and



Kids playing in the sandpit on the fast lane of the M41

the police were horrified to see thousands of people running up the motorway towards them. They hurriedly 'de-arrested' the crew and backed off, as the vehicles were reclaimed. The sides of the lorries were opened up - the music started. The crowd roared. The party had begun!

The road was decorated with banners and a ton of sand was deposited, allowing kids to play safely in the fast lane, whilst stalls set up on the hard shoulder. Giant

30 foot pantomime dames glided through the crowds, but beneath one was a pneumatic drill, digging craters in the road in time with the techno music. Sapling trees were planted in the holes.

At the end of the day fires were lit on the road, litter was collected, and banners removed. For nearly 10 hours the M41 vibrated, not to the repetitive roar of the car system, but to a human uprising, the living sound of a festival.

Earth First! Action Update (see pg 21)

Naked protest at Big Green Gathering

When it was discovered that Wiltshire police were conducting random strip searching and conducting intimate body searches on people arriving at the Big Green Gathering last month, about 40 people stripped off and paraded in front of their mobile unit in protest of this totally unwarranted and intimidatory practice.

Up until then the event had been going perfectly - greens of all kinds soaking up the unique atmosphere generated when kindred spirits gather together. The police squad, meanwhile, instead of enjoying the sunshine, were sitting in their crowded van, with air-conditioning powered by a petrol-driven generator - the only fossil-fuelled energy source on site. Everyone else complied with the ban on such things and employed renewable energy sources, including a solar-powered telephone.

Evidently the police were getting bored sitting around waiting for trouble that was never going to happen, and so decided to make some themselves. The police informed the naked protesters that the searches were conducted due to "strip searching being part of the contract for the Gathering so it could go ahead legally". In other words, they were doing it because they could...

At last year's Gathering the police had been extremely troublesome - setting up road blocks, searching vehicles, turning away non ticket holders, etc. But despite this, the Gathering went smoothly and allayed the concerns held by local people, who were quite happy to see it go ahead again.

This year the organisers went to great lengths to accommodate the police, employing a competent security team, with stewards patrolling the site night and day. They even had to bung the police £10,000 in exchange for permission to hold the event. Yet despite taking this 'bribe', the police just couldn't bear to see the Gathering pass without incident.

(we were tempted to feature a photo of the incident on the front cover, but decided that a shot of Big boring all might be too much for some of our more sensitive readers...) so here's Peg Alexander instead.



Judgement Day - July 8th Nuclear weapons ruled illegal

by Nick Kollerstrom

The International Court of Justice yesterday took a significant step towards eradicating the threat of nuclear weapons, declaring that their use was contrary to international law and established humanitarian standards. The Independent of July 9th, adding that this "unexpectedly robust decision delighted anti-nuclear campaigners." "Use or threat of use 'unlawful' was the headline of the Financial Times, explaining that such had been found to be unlawful "under most circumstances."

UK Judge Dame Rosalind Higgins put the matter succinctly:

"A weapon will be unlawful per se if it is incapable of being targeted at a military objective only, even if collateral harm occurs... To the extent that a specific nuclear weapon would be incapable of this distinction, its use would be illegal."

The Court found itself unable to agree whether a limiting 'Paragraph F' should be inserted, to the effect that the Court had been unable to resolve whether use of nuclear weapons would be legal or not "in an extreme circumstance of self-defence, in which the very survival of a state would be at stake." Judge Higgins voted against this compromise clause. With the 14 judges split 7-7, Judge Bedjaoui had the casting vote, in favour of its inclusion. He explained:

"There will be those who will not fail to interpret Paragraph F as envisaging the possibility of states having recourse to nuclear arms in exceptional circumstances. I cannot insist too strongly that the inability of the Court to go further than the point it actually reached cannot in any way be interpreted as itself evidence of a (loophole) for the recognition of the legal

permissibility of threatening or using nuclear weapons."

Or as IALANA's President Peter Weiss put it: "The only exception is an extreme case, and in that case its use might be illegal." Normally there would be 15 judges which would prevent any such situation from arising, however one died during the hearings leaving an even number. This is the first time the ICJ has commented on the legality of a weapons system.

Rob Green commented:

"Nato's insistence on the option to use nuclear weapons first is now illegal; as is the new UK-France sub-strategic deterrence doctrine of threatening 'rogue states with a low-yield warning shot if British or French "vital interests are at risk."

In 1985, the UK's Ecology Party initiated and helped to organise the four day London Nuclear Warfare Tribunal, with Richard Falk and Sean McBride on its panel. The first extensive airing of the subject of nuclear illegality, it took place on the 50th anniversary of the Nuremberg Judgement. That was a development of Die Grunen's 1983 Tribunal on First Strike policies held at Nuremberg. In the late 1980s momentum built up for a worldwide citizen's initiative to ask the UN to put this big question to the highest legal authority in the world. We have now received its answer.

Kids too eco-aware

Former leader of the Liberal Democrats, Sir David Steel, is doing little to salvage the Party's shattered green credentials. The Guardian reported that in July he was appearing at a press conference to state that schools are actually too hot on the environment thing: "It is a matter of real concern that many children know more about global warming than they do about how their food is produced" he would say. Sir David's advisors were reported as privately saying this may be a mistake. The less children know about BSE, Farmer's Lung, sheep-dip poisoning, battery farming, veal calf rearing, pesticide spraying and so on the better.

The environmental education being received by children today offers one of the best hopes for the future. With new generations understanding better the crises that are looming ahead, they might actually do something about it. Which makes David Steel's position it all the more incredible. However, as Executive Chairman of the Countryside Movement - perhaps not that incredible.

Animal Rights Carnival

To force animal issues onto the agenda in the next General Election, the Green Party are planning to hold a carnival in London. They have set a tentative date of 22nd March 1997. All animal rights/welfare organisations are urged to participate, and help create a massive event that sends a ringing message to politicians of all parties: that people want an end to animal abuse - and they want it now!

For more information please contact:
GP Animal Rights Policy Working Gp,
9 Osborne Road, Broadstairs, Kent
CT10 3AE 01843 863943

NOT GUILTY!

Ploughshares
women freed

After 57 disarmaments, £4.5 million of damage and a collective total of 156 years spent in prison, the Ploughshares movement finally clocked up its first acquittal.

Amid scenes of jubilation, Lotta, Andrea, Joe and Angie were cleared of causing £1.5m of damage to an Indonesian bound Hawk fighter. Despite disallowing "hearsay" evidence, Judge Wickham recognised the women's defence, and permitted a video containing shocking footage of the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre to be shown to the jury.

Defence witnesses included Jose Ramos Horte, East Timor's exiled Foreign minister, Carmel Budiarto, who spent 3 years in an Indonesian prison, and John Pilger, who had entered East Timor in 1993 to secretly film the documentary *"Death of a Nation"*.

After 4 hours of deliberation, the judge accepted a 10-2 majority on the 3 counts of criminal damage and 4 counts of conspiracy. *"When the foreman stood up I was thinking: well, I've prepared myself for several years in jail and here it comes,"* recalled Andrea Needham, who, like Lotta and Angie, defended herself. *"When he said 'not guilty' there was this huge gasp around the courtroom. We didn't dare breathe until he'd read out each of the 7 verdicts, and then the whole courtroom erupted."*

"We were overwhelmed by the courage of the jury in accepting what we said," says Joe Wilson. *"That verdict was an indictment of British Government policy and British Aerospace's actions in selling weapons to Indonesia. It was a day for justice, and a day for East Timor."* Also undoubtedly a day which will have made the whole 'arms industry' very nervous. As one of the women said, *"Outside people were saying that we couldn't go around smashing up other people's property. But people in prison don't have hang-ups about that. They accepted that if planes are going to kill people, then you stop them."*

The women now intend to bring out a private prosecution against BAe for contravening the Genocide Act.

Further information:
Seeds of Hope 0171 923 9511
Stop the Hawks 0161 834 0295

Earth First! Action Update (see page 21)

The Asylum Bill
GATT and Equity

by Martin Hughes-Jones

The Tory Asylum and Immigration Bill, which has been designed to tighten up on immigration has been rightly condemned as being a wrongheaded and racist attempt to control the inevitable effects of the so called "free market".

A substantial proportion of the asylum seekers and refugees reaching affluent western nations including Britain stems from the huge and growing differences in wealth between the haves and the have nots of the planet. The 'White List' of countries from which asylum seekers are unlikely to be accepted will mean that genuine cases will be overlooked and UK Plc will be free to continue to exploit these nations regardless of the social and environmental costs. "Free trade" and the GATT has one objective - to increase the volume of trade by freeing it of all barriers. Under GATT (called the World Trade Organisation since January 1995) the consumption of resources and the volume of world trade will increase massively in the next decade. It will allow a deluge of artificially "cheap" manufactured goods and agricultural produce from overseas to threaten British industry and jobs. The real costs of production - the social and environmental plunder are conveniently ignored.

The logical way to address this problem is not by sticking plasters, such as this Bill which mask the symptoms, but by scrapping the GATT, cancelling debt and introducing trading practices which allow countries to develop in a socially fair manner. The flow of economic migrants and the plundering of the resources of poor countries such as Uganda and Vietnam are the inevitable consequence. It also damages our home industries because resources and goods are not fairly priced. The solution is to scrap this monstrously unfair free for all.

The truth is that this bill was designed to protect the privileges of the fat cats of the planet whilst globally more and more peoples are condemned to an economic serfdom from which there is no escape. (e.g. the child labourers of Egypt and Colombia.) Look how Shell promote their "Better Britain" campaign and at the same time plunder the lands of native Nigerian

peoples. The Asylum Bill is doubly harmful because it erodes the rights of genuine refugees and at the same time does nothing to tackle the underlying problems which give many people reasons for wanting to come to the rich nations. We are now seeing the failure of so called free trade to deliver security because it ignores the global social and environmental crisis and the worsening plight of the poor and hungry in the world.

Take cut flowers for example; our home grown industry is being undermined by third world crops which are produced by low wage labour and that labour is being slowly poisoned by the excessive use of agrichemicals. To stop the damage and to encourage beneficial economic activity we must reduce harmful trade and allow poor nations to determine their most appropriate economic course without being forced by rich nations to destroy their natural wealth.

and Blair....

Labour have produced a depressing little leaflet for enquirers called *"New life for Britain"*. There Blair says... *"Britain has fallen from 13th to 18th in the world prosperity league"* and then later on page 9 *"Strong on defence. The first duty of the government is to protect the British people and defend the UK. New Labour will keep Britain's defences strong. We will carry out a strategic defence review to reassess the essential security interest and defence needs of the country."*

Now as Labour is firmly behind free trade and GATT we can be pretty sure that economic refugees will increase and the money gap between rich and poor nations will worsen. Blair has implied that he wants to keep Britain at the top of the prosperity league so we can see why NL will need strong defences and also by implication draconian policies to keep potential immigrants out.

...and Claire

Constituents of Claire Short's might care to ask her what she will do about our pathetic aid to poor nations (in her new job) and how will she get out of the GATT treadmill which makes it worse. How long before Blair dumps her from this job too?

"It's the end of the world as we know it"

Global warming - climate change

The world is overheating - official

The most significant aspect of the Government's review of the effects of global warming (climate change) on the UK went unnoticed. This frightening revelation became apparent as John Gummer talked about how Britain will need to adapt to the coming changes, i.e. the Government has abandoned all pretence of trying to prevent global warming. It admits its totally inadequate target to cut CO2 emissions can at best only slow down the process.

Instead of going all out for measures to reverse the process, the Government plans to waste enormous resources in a futile attempt to alleviate the effects of global warming, for example, by increasing the height of sea walls. This complacent and myopic policy is following the same line which led to the beef crisis, only the catastrophe looming ahead will cause BSE to pale into insignificance.

It will have disastrous consequences for two reasons:

1. Attempting to tackle the effects of global warming will weaken the resolve to implement measures to reverse the process. People will believe that we can somehow muddle through with a quick fix here and there, and will be less concerned about addressing the root causes through saving energy, minimising car use, etc.
2. Massive amounts of energy and resources will be required to, for example, fortify sea defences against the predicted extreme climate changes. The construction itself will therefore result in pumping yet more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. It's like trying to put out a fire by pouring petrol onto it.

In any case, we are not facing the picturesque scenario painted by Gummer, of fields of sunflowers and a booming tourist industry. The effects of global warming will be catastrophic. It won't be a case of a few species of plants and animals becoming extinct. The complex ecology of every

ecosystem will be severely disrupted. Millions of species all over the world will die out - unable to migrate northwards fast enough (those encapsulated in nature reserves surrounded by farms, cities and roads won't have anywhere to go). Many species mobile enough to migrate at a rate of some 5 metres a day will not survive in their new habitats, due to severed food chains resulting from diminished biodiversity. No SSSI will survive.

Disease and bugs

The effects on the human population will be no less dramatic. Rising sea levels threaten some of the world's largest cities and heavily populated lowlands. Famine, disease and displacement will occur on a scale unprecedented in human history.

There will be some beneficiaries of course. Certain species of insects will thrive. There will be bugs everywhere, including malarial mosquitos, and crop ravaging pests. Rats will do well, as will the infectious diseases they spread.

These changes are well underway. The difference today is that everyone knows about the problem, and what needs to be done about it. What hasn't changed is the huge quantities of greenhouse gases we're continuing to spew into the atmosphere every day.

No more hot air

For over 20 years the Green Party has been ignored, ridiculed and attacked for ringing the alarm bells about the dire consequences that would result if drastic steps were not taken to curb greenhouse gas emissions. Now we have finally won the argument, but the alarm bells are still ringing.

We urgently need a radical programme to transform us from consumers to conservers, to adopt sustainable patterns of living, which maintains the planet's life support system instead of destroying it. What we don't need, especially when considering global warming, is any more hot air.

A survival issue by Aubrey Meyer

The Global Commons Institute (GCI) argues that climate change is a survival issue, and therefore, that equity is at the heart of the policy agenda which must now emerge if we are to arrest further climate changes.

GCI argued this case at the UN from 1990 as the UN framework climate convention was developed up to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio. The convention does state that the problem of climate change must be solved on the basis of equity. Developed countries - so-called - were called on to take the lead in restraining the greenhouse gas emissions responsible for the problem.

Between 1993 and 1995, GCI was involved in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Economics Working Group. It was here that we ended up at loggerheads with economists who argued for a policy employing cost/benefit analysis - ie by comparing the costs and benefits of climate change, or the costs of cutting emissions versus the costs of the damages if you didn't cut the emissions. Their methods and results were largely discredited because of the GCI's position. We exposed the fine print of global cost benefit analysis. UN bureaucrats and diplomats agreed that the method and the results were discriminatory and absurd.

GCI is now arguing that equity and survival translate into policy terms as convergence and contraction. Efficiency is only ever a subset of equity and not vice versa. We have strong support for this case from many parties at the UN both North and South but also face obstruction from those still wedded to the globalised subculture of efficiency.

GCI will talk further about this at the Green Party Conference.

Aubrey Meyer E-mail: saveforests@gn.apc.org
Web: <http://www.gn.apc.org/gc>



The Pill to end all pills

Green King

by Peter Barnett

The figure of King Arthur has become a familiar sight at demonstrations up and down the country. After numerous arrests, he is also a familiar figure in various police station and courts. He has successfully secured damages from the police for wrongful arrest and false imprisonment, blown a hole in part of the Criminal Justice Act, and is currently taking the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, to the European Court of Justice over the right for religious freedom....

Hardened campaigner

It is not so easy to dismiss Arthur as some deranged nutt. Inevitably the eccentricity of his appearance, and his personal religious belief in reincarnation invites ridicule and derision. However, behind all the regalia is a highly intelligent and articulate person, dedicated to the various causes of civil liberties, religious freedom, ecology... or as he puts it... "fighting for Honour, Truth and Justice".

His stands against the Poll Tax, access to Stonehenge, Whatley Quarry, the Criminal Justice Act, and defence of the 'Camelot' camp at Newbury have received extensive media coverage, both here and abroad. The police have consistently underestimated his ability to thwart their attempts to convict him, and he has earned the respect of many journalists, and gets much more serious coverage than might otherwise be expected.



King Arthur joins The Green Party

He has often been arrested on offensive weapon charges for carrying his broadsword Excalibur - until they discover he is legally entitled to wear it as it is an official ceremonial sword used in his duties as a Druid.

Arthur Pendragon, King of the Britons, Honoured Pendragon of the Eboracbury Order of Bruids and Official Swordbearer of the Secular Order of Bruids, Titular King and Chosen Chief of the Royal Arthurian Warband, Member of the Council of British Bruid Orders, Bard of the Free Corseid of Caer Abiri, Swordbearer to the Cotswold Order of Bruids, Champion of the Free and Open Corseid of Caer Baban and Honorary Life President of the Narrow Hamlets do hereby royally appoint UK Online Internet Providers by royal decree, that they may enable the peoples of the earth to share in my message that they may unite the peoples of this sacred and holy island and that they may bear my standards forward into the next millennium for Truth, Honour and Justice

Revered upon this day July 1996 before Truth and the Law

Arthur must be the only person on Earth with more titles than Michael Heseltine

Media star

Arthur's credibility is further enhanced from being a member of Mensa, and he is skilled at fending off difficult questions from aggressive interviewers. Indeed he performed superbly on two of the most challenging TV shows, *Clive Anderson Talks Back* and *Richard Littlejohn Live and Uncut*. With the latter, aware of Littlejohn's right wing tendencies and belligerent style, he engineered a ploy to discourage attempts to ridicule and belittle him. Just before going on Arthur informed the programme controller that beneath his robes he was stark naked, and if Littlejohn got out of hand, he would disrobe before the cameras - live and uncut! Littlejohn was gentle a lamb.

In addition to numerous brief appearances on radio and television, documentaries have been made about him for Radio 4 (half hour), 3D and Strange But True. He has appeared on American, German, Dutch, Australian and Canadian



TV, whilst his press cuttings file for one month exceeds what the Green Party receives in a year.

Arthur on-line

Does Arthur's outlandish appearance detract from the serious issues?

"The media are more interested in personalities than issues. I give them a personality, and gain access to media to promote the issues. It's not so different from when Greenpeace protesters dress up as puffins - Friends of the Earth campaigners come up with some wonderfully imaginative visual stunts to attract the cameras."

What level of interest is there in King Arthur? The Internet provider UK Online approached him, offering a free account and Web site if he would give their service his royal seal of approval. The Environment Council seemed quite pleased that after several weeks of launching their Web site, over 500 people had visited it. Compare this with just the first week of King Arthur's site going online, with over 15,000 'hits'.

Joining the Green Party

What did Arthur join the Green Party?

"Wherever I go I seem to bump into Green Party members, fighting for the same issues. So I decided to find out more, and read the 'Manifesto for a Sustainable Society', various pamphlets and of course, some issues of Green World. I was deeply impressed with the quality and quality of Green Party policy and philosophy. Hardly a single issue party, as I often hear people describe the party. Anyway, I was inspired by what I read, so I joined."

Xenotransplantation

Cross species organ transplants

by Dan Lyons

Since the beginning of the century there have been many attempts to carry out animal to human transplants, all without success. In the infamous case of Baby Fae, a new born baby was given a baboon's heart and survived just 20 days. Apparently no attempt was made to find a human donor.

More recently (1990s) xenotransplants have taken place in the US, involving baboon and pig organs. In each case the recipient survived only a matter of hours at worst and no more than 70 days at best.

Organ rejection

Xenotransplants bring even greater dangers: *hyperacute rejection*, in which the transplant is destroyed within minutes. Pigs are now being bred with genetically engineered organs to try and overcome this.

Later this year the company Imutran of Cambridge plans to attempt the first transgenic pig to human transplant.

Money for false hope

The market for xenotransplants will be worth around \$6 billion a year, excluding the lucrative provision of immuno suppressant drugs. Millions of pounds have already been invested in this new 'gold mine.' Imutran are backed by Warburg Pincus, New York venture capitalists and Sandoz, the Swiss drug giant who have bought the rights to market the transgenic pigs (and also produce the immuno suppressant Cyclosporin A).

Viruses

BSE is an example of a disease mutating and crossing the species barrier. Both HIV and Ebola viruses were thought to have been transferred from monkeys to humans. A virus harmless to pigs may well be deadly to humans. DLRM (Doctors and Lawyers for Responsible Medicine) are campaigning about the dangers of virus transmission inherent in xenotransplantation. There is no such thing as a virus-free pig and introducing a 'foreign' organ, viruses and all, into a body with lowered immunity is a 'recipe for disaster'.

Human Donors

Less than 20% of the UK public carry donor cards, although another 50% of people are willing to donate organs. In some countries a scheme operates where it is presumed that

patients are willing to donate organs unless they have specifically opted out. Another way to increase the availability of human organs is to relax the criteria for acceptable organs and accept older and/or non-heart beating donors.

The cost of transplant operations and the shortage of beds and other resources limits the availability of the procedure. The solution, as usual, lies in prevention, not cure.

Pigs Might Fly is a new campaign against xenotransplantation from Uncaged, 14 Ridgeway Road, Sheffield S12 2SS Tel/fax 0114 253 0020

Doctors & Lawyers for Responsible Medicine (DLRM), 104b Weston Park, London N8 9PP Tel 0181 3409813

IF THE BEEF DOESN'T KILL YOU, I WILL

Meat may look harmless. It may taste good. But it can kill you. Consider this:

- Some experts speculate that chickens or pigs may have transmitted CJD to humans.
- 54% of frozen and 42% of chilled broiler chickens are infected with salmonella, campylobacter and other potentially deadly bacteria.
- Chicken contains as much Cholesterol as beef and is found ONLY in animal products.
- Eating any meat promotes heart disease, cancer, stroke, obesity and high blood pressure.
- Women who eat eggs daily nearly triple their risk of breast cancer.

The ONLY way to ensure that meat won't kill you is to throw it away.

Call us for FREE vegetarian recipes.
They will blow your mind, not destroy your body.

PETA

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS
PO BOX 3169, LONDON NW1 2JJ

0171-388 4922

Loads a money

(but not for you)

When it was revealed this summer that the government had paid a staggering £450 million to consultants to advise them on privatising the railways (which most of the country is opposed to), there was a short period of outrage and condemnation, but it soon passed as the media focused on the next story. We all seem to be suffering now from 'scandal fatigue'.

This was no isolated incident of profligate use of the nation's money by the Government. They have been wasting unimaginable sums in recent years. Billions of pounds have been wasted on privatisations, on consultants, advertising, sweeteners and undervaluing shares.

And that is the tip of the iceberg. The MOD overspends its already vast budget by hundreds of millions of pounds, through incompetence, carelessness and corruption. The Poll Tax fiasco cost £19 billions, and that was petty cash compared to the money they found to fund the Gulf War. Last issue we revealed how arms sales often end up as giveaways. We advance credit to oppressive regimes who fail to cough up the dosh. Iraq alone owes an incredible £652 million. The list goes on and on.

And all the while they are imposing cuts, cuts, cuts. Education has been one of the prime targets. Most schools today have to depend on fundraising and the generosity of parents to get by. Universities and colleges are threatening to charge students tuition fees, and the student grant is being phased out.

Money money everywhere..

Despite what we are told, Britain is still a very wealthy country. It can afford to pay for a decent health service, education system, social service, etc. So where is all the wealth going? Fat cats! The 358 richest people in the world own as much wealth as half the world's population. The gap between the rich and the poor is still widening, whilst the very fabric of society is crumbling as cuts are imposed in every nook and cranny.

It is an obscene situation which none of the mainstream political parties have the courage to take on. Now the Greens have firmly embraced the duality of ecology and equity, it is to them we must look for the solutions. Join them in their struggle to create a decent, safe and sustainable future for all.



Student loans

Millstone for life

These are a much more sinister reason for replacing the grant with loans. Debt is a very effective means of control. It restricts your freedom and binds you to the establishment, just where they want you.

Most people spend most of their lives in debt. The biggest, and most restrictive is the home mortgage. Once you are saddled with this, typically having to pay hundreds of pounds a month, you are compelled to have a job which pays enough to cover the premiums (and everything else), or face repossession, often still owing a fortune with nothing to show for it.

With the scarcity of stable, well paid jobs you are even more trapped. You cannot afford to resign if you're treated badly. You can't go off travelling for a year or two - it's even risky falling ill these days.

Destroy that credit card

Once you are in debt, it can be extremely difficult to get out of it. Credit cards are responsible for countless tragedies. They are so easy to use - how tempting to go and buy a hi-fi system, and then a meal, or some clothes. Before long you end up only being able to afford to pay the interest on the amount you owe. The worst cases end up using one credit card to pay off another, spiralling towards bankruptcy. If you have one, tear it up today, and experience the feeling of liberation.

Protest!

Saddling students with a debt, currently averaging around £3000 by the time they have finished studying is appalling. It is putting the millstone around their necks before they have earned their first wage. If there is any way you can avoid it, do so. And protest for God's sake. Remember the hypocrites imposing this on you enjoyed full grants when they were students, and are now pulling up the ladder behind them.

Student Grants

Green Party Policy Proposals

The Green Party deplores the decisions of the present Conservative Government and of some Opposition parties to reduce and possibly phase out student grants, and to introduce loans or taxes which will saddle students with debt. The effect is simply to discourage students from less affluent backgrounds or with less affluent prospects, and thus to deprive both them in particular and the community as a whole of the benefits of educating them.

The Green Party reaffirms its commitment to education for life throughout life, and in particular to ensure appropriate community support for those engaged in study at universities and equivalent institutions.

To this end the following policies are to be inserted into the MFS as ED320-3, renumbering others as necessary:

Student Grants

ED320 The Green Party is committed to student grants, not loans, which will provide students with a basic income sufficient to meet their needs while in full-time education at universities and equivalent institutions. When a full Basic Income Scheme is implemented (see EC750-3), student grants should be integrated into it, allowing for needs which apply to students in particular.

ED321 Grants should be available not only to those seeking university degrees but also to those undertaking equivalent professional qualifications which similarly require academic study without the opportunity of earning income by practising the profession while qualifying. Grants should be available to meet the needs of mature students undertaking such study or retraining later in life.

ED322 Qualification for a grant from a local Council should be based on previous residence in the community, as in The Green Party's policies on citizenship. Grants should be sufficient to meet all a student's basic needs, as in the Basic Income Scheme. No deduction should be made in respect of parental means, but a student's own means should be taken into account.

ED323 Students should not be charged fees for their tuition.

Education

For life or (un)employment?

by **Lindy Barnett**

Education in Britain today has been overwhelmed by a politically inspired right-wing agenda. More than ever before, the education system is geared to *training* people for the workplace. It is like a giant factory churning out specialised units - cogs to fit in the hugely destructive global industrial machine. The idea of education for life - to help people achieve their full potential and self-fulfilment has been lost in the drive to build a skill-based workforce based on narrow, short term commercial ends. There is a bitter irony in that this sort of employment is declining as companies continue 'downsizing' - using new technology to replace employees, and relocate in countries where labour is cheap, and expensive regulations on health, safety, environmental protection, etc. are minimal. Youth unemployment grew by 30% in the UK this year.

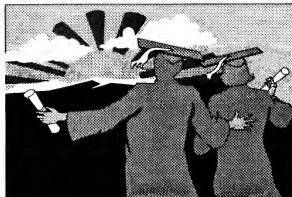
Recipe for disaster

The failure of the market-driven capitalist system is daily becoming more blatantly obvious, even to its strongest advocates, but they won't admit it. Across the globe there is increasing unemployment, poverty, repression, environmental destruction, and still the grey politicians, industrialists and financiers continue to promote the very things that are causing the crises - globalisation, unfettered free trade and unsustainable economic growth. The obsession of conventional education - to train people for jobs and not for life has sharpened dramatically in the past decade, and is fully supported by the main opposition parties. Just listen to any Tory, Labour or Lib Dem, forever going on about training, vocational skills - the whole thrust based on a utilitarian socio-economic rationale of training to carry out a specific function - education to minimum standards for future employment. Planning our future society with these short term principles is a recipe for disaster. We need to prepare people for a world in which will be very different from the present system, which by its very nature cannot sustain itself indefinitely.

Real education - Green education

The Greens believe that our children have the potential for everything and to achieve anything if they could be released from the straitjacket of conventional thinking. It is a perspective that is not led by market forces, ideology, the employer, the needs of schools, teachers or cynics in the media. It is founded on the most essential element of the future - the creative and intuitive potential of our children. For ultimately they are going to inherit the poisoned chalice - the mess made by past generations. To sort it out they will need a much deeper understanding of all things, a wider knowledge base, the ability to learn from our mistakes, to see the value of co-operation over competition, of quality of life over materialistic standard of living, and so on.

The worst thing we can do is to continue 'educating' them on the old industrial society model with its fragmentation tendencies and narrow outcomes, as is evident from where such an education policy has left us today.



Education policy

Green and Grey

ITEM	GREEN PARTY	OTHER PARTIES
National Curriculum	The notion of a prescribed curriculum whether children want it or need it flies in the face of basic principles	Almost unquestioning endorsement of the right wing framework for the National Curriculum.
National Curriculum testing and league tables	There is little evidence to suggest that these make any impact on children's achievement, let alone self-esteem. Competition does not promote learning.	The right wingers initiated the current set up - the left have argued for an extension to test 5 year olds.
Private schools	Opposed to selectivity on the basis of ability to pay.	Publicly supported by the right - recently endorsed by the left.
Grant Maintained schools	Opposed on the basis that it weakens the most democratic tier of local control. Schools are in effect opting into central control.	Flogged dead by the right and revived by the left.
Democracy in education	Greens are dedicated to democracy at all levels. LEAs, schools and classrooms.	Plenty of lip service, but difficult to find any evidence.
Continuing education	On-going education is an entitlement which needs to be student centred and determined.	Adult education is essentially about training a work force.
Special educational needs	The Green Party is a signatory to the Centre for Studies 'Integration Charter'. Our policy outlines a gradual shift to integration.	In practice both left and right segregate those that they feel don't fit in.

on education...

"The Green Party is light years ahead of other political parties in its thinking."

Janet Meighan
(Education Now)

National Curriculum

The government introduced the National Curriculum in 1988 for two reasons. 1. To promote economic growth by focusing on a more jobs orientated curriculum. 2. To ensure the growth of patriotism. Greater emphasis was required on teaching kids about Britain's 'glorious' past

Light Years Ahead

Some live issues in Green Party education policy

A 40 page booklet detailing the Green approach to education, full of ideas which can be applied now, in spite of central government strictures.

Available for £1.25 (inc p&p) from Greentrade, 43 Green Street, Hereford HR1 2QH



Why Work?

by Peter Merry

Why are there 18 million people "unemployed" in the EU, being told they are a burden on society, whilst at the same time so much potentially creative, socially-useful work remains undone? Why are so many people in paid employment forced to do work that bears little relation either to their individual needs as human beings, or to the well-being of their immediate communities and environment? How is it that so many things people used to do for themselves, are now increasingly performed through the purchase and consumption of a product or service? *Why are we working - for whom and to what ends?*

Who benefits?

The problems generated by involuntary unemployment are well debated: the social stigma, leading to feelings of worthlessness and frustration, often resulting in violence within families and communities. Most people believe *employment* is the solution, but take a closer look at what it often entails:

- working with the sole aim of boosting profitability, little of which you will ever see;
- overwork and stress, as you bid for the renewal of your short-term contract;
- working for ends that are damaging to your environment, useless for your own family and friends, and extremely harmful to others elsewhere on the planet.

Why on earth do we do it?!

The issue is not limited to the structures of employment. To create a job, we have to create money to employ that person by boosting productivity. If we produce more, we have to find someone to consume it. We (yes, it's the same "we") are therefore constantly bombarded with (very expensive) images urging us to *consume, consume, consume*. It is made a matter of social status. Every area of our lives is increasingly manipulated to feed the new gods - Productivity and Economic Growth.

It could get pretty depressing at this point. Fortunately, Greens have got beyond that stage and have developed a wide range of alternative policies and

concrete projects to build new, people- and planet-friendly economies.

Tax and benefit

There are two main objectives: job creation and removing the need for paid employment.

At present, taxation makes labour very expensive and energy relatively cheap, encouraging companies to reduce labour costs and increase the intensity of their energy use. This promotes unemployment, and the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources and resulting pollution.

The Greens advocate 'eco-tax', to

"To change the nature of work would be to change the underlying basis of society. We are challenged to find or create jobs and ways to work that restore value to the work itself, instead of the profits extracted from it. For work that has inherent value becomes erotic in the sense of connecting, enabling us to bond to the world in meaningful ways, to use our power, our abilities, and to see their results."

(Starhawk)

shift taxation off labour and onto energy-use at source - a double-whammy, creating employment and reducing ecological damage.

The eco-tax, however, without some form of redistribution, would hit those on lower incomes particularly hard. And as pointed out above, employment is not the solution to unemployment. The second objective is to remove the dependency on paid employment. We should not be demanding our right to a job in order to be able to meet our basic needs - we should be demanding our basic needs directly. These can be met through both policy reform and immediate action.

Basic Income

At the heart of the policy reform is the Green Party's Basic Income scheme. This is an automatic payment to every woman, man and child sufficient to cover the basic needs of food, fuel and shelter, independent of any income or employment. It provides the security to allow people to choose what

type of work they do, for how long, and for how much. Whereas the present system of benefits actively discourages people from taking on part-time work by deducting earnings from benefit, a guaranteed Basic Income provides an incentive to work and earn extra on top.

The Green economy

It will take time before any grey government sees the light on this one, but meanwhile people are getting involved in projects to build their own local parallel economies. Local Exchange and Trading Systems (LETS) are one of the huge successes of the recent years with over 400 operating in the UK, and they are rapidly spreading across Europe. A directory of people's wants and offers in a local area, linked through a LETS unit (local currency), provide access to services and goods for people who might otherwise not be able to afford them. At the same time it allows people to use their own skills and creativity to benefit others. No-one is "redundant" in this system.

There are many other projects connected to the mainstream economy, but on a local level, which help build more human-scale economies. Community banks and Credit Unions generate and recycle capital within communities, enabling the creation of community businesses and schemes like Community Supported Agriculture, all of which bring personally fulfilling and socially-useful employment.

These ideas, and many more, form the green vision for our society. The task now is to take the ideas for action: experiment, innovate and learn. In this way we are building our new society without waiting for the policy-makers. The policy suggestions we have must be constantly researched and developed. There is a role for everyone. If we all play our part, future generations may no longer need to ask, "Why Work?".

Peter Merry works for the Centre for Human Ecology, Edinburgh

Why Work? is a campaign run by the Green Party and the New Economics Foundation. For further details, contact Peter Merry c/o The Green Party, 1a Waterlow Road, London N19 5NJ.

High Street banks

Gambling with more than money

by Jo Hamilton

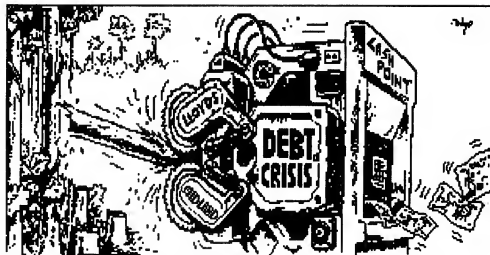
Banks are involved in more than just giving you freebies in Freshers week and offering competitive overdrafts. Setting up arms deals, making money out of the poorest people and operating with no respect for human rights, ethics or the environment are some of the not so pleasant sides of High Street banks and they're too important to gamble with.

As a student you are worth £18,000 over a lifetime to the banks - they are desperate for your custom. This puts you in a powerful position to register your concern and choose a bank which has some ethics. By doing this you become part of a massive student campaign that is leading the way in urging the banks to review their policies on Third World debt and ethical finance. This year students on over 30 campuses will be boycotting Lloyds and Midland banks ... will you be joining them?

Why should I boycott Lloyds and Midland?

Debt:

These two banks have by far the most exposure to Third World Debt out of the high street banks. By focusing on Lloyds and Midland concessions will be won from all the banks for fear of being boycotted next. Lloyds made £50m profit from their debt exposure last year, Midland made £41m. This is money taken from countries



It is estimated that the average student is eventually worth £18,000 in profits to a UK bank

who have high child mortality rates and have already repaid their debts many times over.

Ethical Lending:

These two banks have an appalling record in lending and financing projects with no consideration to humanitarian, ethical or environmental issues. The Scott Report revealed that Midland was involved in setting up arms deals, financing arms to Iraq as well as financing arms sales to countries with bad human rights records such as Turkey and Indonesia. Lloyds are the main bankers to Shell (remember

Ken Saro-Wiwa?) and the principal bankers to Costa Rica, who have won the contract for the Newbury Bypass.

Porte Alegre, Brazil

"A woman social worker is welcomed by five children. The parents have gone out foraging in the garbage heaps. Noticing how poorly the children look, the woman asked them whether they have eaten recently. 'Yes miss, yesterday mummy made little cakes from wet newspapers.' 'What? Little cakes from what?' asks the woman. 'Mummy takes a sheet of newspaper, makes it into a ball and kneads it into little cakes. We eat them, drink some water and feel nice and full inside.'"

Newsletter of the Brazil Evangelical Church

All banks are to some extent involved in these issues, but the table below allows you to make an informed choice about the major banks and building societies. It is worth remembering that when you open a bank account there is more to consider than free gifts. By choosing to boycott Lloyds and Midland you will become one of the thousands of people already bringing pressure to bear on the banks and calling for ethical alternatives to a policy which puts profits before people. *Your actions matter - peace of mind is worth more than a record voucher!*

For more information contact Lloyds & Midland Boycott, c/o Grassroots, MUSU, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PR 0161 274 4665

	debt exposure	financing arms deals	banks & companies involved in apartheid	investment in environmental damage projects	trading slavery and human rights abuses	Overall Score
Banks with Student Accounts						
Barclays	£202m	yes	yes	yes	no	1
Bank of Scotland	not available	no evidence	no evidence	yes	no	2
Co-operative	zero	no	no	no	yes	4.5
Halifax	zero	no	no	no	no	4.5
Lloyds-TSB	£2700m	yes	yes	yes	no	0
Midland	£1006m	yes	yes	yes	no	0
Nat West	£88	yes	yes	yes	no	2

Drugs and the Green Party

by Peter Barnett

With major issues of grave public concern, from the crumbling health service to escalating crimes of violence, why on Earth is the Green Party running a campaign advocating a relaxation of the laws affecting the cannabis? - at best, a low priority issue, and at worst, one that most people associate with drug abuse. Isn't this just the sort of thing that loses us credibility and public sympathy?

Not so low priority

Last month the results of the most comprehensive survey ever conducted on drug taking among young people were released. It revealed that almost half 15-16 years olds had smoked cannabis, a fifth had used solvents, 15% had taken LSD or other hallucinogens, 8% Ecstasy, 2% crack and 1.5 % had tried heroin. The report revealed a sharp increase in the number of young people experimenting with all kinds of drugs since 1989.

Despite all the efforts to crackdown on illegal drugs - increased resources, more draconian punishments, publicity campaigns, etc., consumption continues to rise. The scale is such that everyone is affected. It is an issue which directly and significantly impacts upon the other issues mentioned above, the health service and violent crime. Far from being a 'low priority' issue, it is a growing problem across the globe, and one that urgently needs addressing.

Serious debate, however, is stifled by the hysterical rantings from the press and vote-seeking politicians. The main opposition parties refuse to discuss it, and muzzle anyone in their ranks who attempts to open a debate on the subject. This leaves the Green Party alone in refusing to duck the issue, and it has developed policies which would reduce the spread of hard drugs, minimise the dangers of using soft drugs, and lower the crime rate in the process.

Failure of the Government

The government's policies to address the problem have failed spectacularly. With each crackdown drug usage escalates. As with so many other issues, our drug laws are not based on common sense, but on knee-jerk populism, political expediency and the safeguarding of vested interests. As a result, the problems of hard drug abuse and associated crime continues to grow, whilst thousands

of people are criminalised for indulging in the relatively harmless 'recreation' or soft drugs.

There is a huge element of hypocrisy in all of this. In the aforementioned report, the most serious findings were related to legal drugs. Almost all the kids surveyed had consumed alcohol, 78% to intoxication levels - some were regular heavy drinkers. One in three were smokers. These are the real killer drugs, but the government's half-hearted attempts to curb their use in young people has failed totally. There are no moves to ban these lucrative tax raising substances of course. There are an estimated 3 million regular users of cannabis, and some 2 million tabs of Ecstasy being taken every week, mainly by younger people. Alcohol consumption of these soft drug takers is minimal.

Dangers

As experienced users, they are generally well informed about the pros and cons of these substances. When the media and authorities grossly exaggerate, or even blatantly lie about the downside of such substances, they lose all credibility. The tragic consequence of this is that warnings about the very real dangers associated with nastier substances like solvents, crack and heroin, go unheeded.

Which is why the Green Party advocates the line of 'Just say "know"'. Give the full facts about a substance, and let people decide for themselves whether the risks outweigh the benefits. This would almost certainly reduce the number of casualties. Ecstasy has been declared less toxic than aspirin. Most of the tragic deaths of people under the influence of ecstasy have been attributed to the two extremes of dehydration and excessive consumption of water. How many might have lived were they better informed about these hazards?

Decriminalisation

We're told decriminalisation would lead to increased use of hard drugs. Again, the opposite is true. Illegal drugs are easily available to anyone who really wants them. Indeed the harder they crack down, the more widespread they become. Prohibition spells profits. Pushers are aptly named - their sole aim is to actively push drugs. If the use of soft drugs overleads to the use of hard drugs, it's because pushers are peddling both, and are keen to get their clients addicted to heroin or crack for obvious reasons. Decriminalise soft drugs and you break that link.

You also liberate the massive resources currently used by the police chasing millions of soft drug users, so they can more effectively combat the scum dealing in the deadly substances. One of the reasons why the Green

Party's policy for decriminalising cannabis is supported by a number of senior police officers, judges and other 'pillars of society'.

Seeking real solutions

In a nutshell, our present drug laws are a major cause of the problem. The nightmare existence of thousands of tragic souls caught in a vicious circle of addiction, crime and squalor is an abomination. The refusal of those in power to seek real solutions to help these lonely and isolated people out of their misery is a further example of their lack of compassion and common decency.

As the rates of addiction and violent crime increase, they introduce ever more draconian measures, which always prove popular with a gullible public, deceived into believing the problem is being addressed. Thousands of lives are devastated or lost in exchange for a few extra votes, and even greater control over the population generally.

Far from being opposed to the Green Party's campaign to reform our drug laws, I'm thankful that at least we have the courage to address this difficult and controversial issue. I should not wish to share the shame of the other parties who either duck the issue, or ruthlessly exploit it.

Cause for Ignition?

A Green Party member recently resigned on account of the Drugs Campaign. This is very sad on a number of counts:

1. Green Party's policies include many radical ideas - it's inevitable that some will not be to everyone's liking. But if you remain committed to the broad picture, don't resign. The party's policy making process enables all members to input their ideas and beliefs. If you think it's got it wrong somewhere, argue your case - get it debated at Conference, but don't leave us.
2. As Clare Short found out, public discussion of controversial issues like drugs is forbidden, because the rabid right wing tabloids will immediately castigate you with scaremongering populist hysteria, effectively muzzling any serious discussion. If we are to fall in line to appease these self-appointed censors, we must abandon most of our policies, from nuclear disarmament to the abolition of vivisection.
3. As the existing drug laws continue to exacerbate the problems, the need to find real solutions grows, and increasingly people are considering our ideas. As has happened with transport, global warming, ozone, etc. etc., the day will come when our common sense approach to drugs will also become widely accepted.
4. As any of our speakers will testify, at all-party debates at schools, our drugs policy captivates young people above everything else - at least a politician that doesn't lie or distort the facts, or patronise them. Whenever this subject is covered in school debates, the Green win overwhelmingly in the voting session at the end.

The Drugs Campaign News from the Frontline

by Shane Collins

May 17th was National Sowing the Seeds Day, when the Green Party's Drugs Campaign was launched. Over 100 balloons* filled with helium and cannabis seeds were released from the highest point in London - Parliament Hill on Hemstead Heath. With no mainstream political party willing to even discuss drugs, and a growing number of people, particularly the young, using prohibited recreational drugs as a part of their lifestyles, it was time to do something to get the issue on the agenda.

Sowing the Seeds was a huge success. The media lapped it up, and the seeds were distributed at night clubs and festivals went amazingly quickly - people were impressed that at last someone was talking sense. Some have sowed the seeds in public places, so the plants themselves will spring up to make a political statement about the lack of an informed, rational debate on drugs. From teenagers to grandmothers, the campaign has caught the public imagination - just by sowing a seed you can take a stand and join the campaign. Even though the plants will be low in the psychoactive ingredient, it is still illegal to grow them without a Home Office Licence (which we told people to apply for of course).

We found the level of drug education, amongst young people in particular, is actually quite high - and they're rejecting the mass killer alcohol in favour of better and safer alternatives. They see through the propaganda and prohibitionist dogma pumped out by the establishment, and have enthusiastically supported the campaign, confounding fears that we would provoke a moral outrage.

There are numerous arguments in favour of change in the law. With *Sowing the Seeds* we concentrated on the agricultural-industrial uses of the hemp plant. There's also medical uses - cannabis is a therapeutic herb capable of treating a variety of illnesses and, of course, a great reliever of stress. Ecstasy too was used in 1960s America by psychotherapists and is used today in Switzerland by marital therapists.

We all have our reasons for wanting a change. For me it's a question of culture. People have been using drugs for thousands of years, often to escape, but also to gain insight and enlightenment. We live at a time when all sorts of groups are standing up for their right to cultural freedom, as the moral authority of established institutions declines. Recreational drugs



Sowing the Seeds Day - decorating a balloon with appropriate imagery
(photo by Julia Orest)

users are just another group in society demanding the right of cultural self-determination.

Unfortunately, it's not simply a question of rational debate. Whilst there are leading figures in the establishment, including judges, police chiefs, scientists and politicians who advocate decriminalisation, there are powerful vested interests steadfastly opposed to liberalisation. Alcohol producers have a lot to lose, as do the pharmaceutical, cotton and paper industries. They don't want this multi-use, easy-to-grow plant widely available, eating into their profits. Still, we are not daunted by the size of the task ahead of us. It is only a matter of time before the current generation of prohibitionists, clinging to their power to dictate how we should live our lives, are replaced by one with more tolerant, progressive attitudes.

Knowing we are part of a movement that, because of easily defensible historical and social forces, is bound eventually to succeed, gives us an amazing sense of purpose and empowerment. Prohibition fails. On every count. To achieve a change we merely need to mobilise the huge constituency of people who are routinely disobeying these archaic and repressive laws, forcing the politicians to listen.

If there is one thing I am looking forward to, it is telling my grandchildren about the campaign against prohibition, how it all began, and how the law came eventually to be changed. "We were there," I will say.

Where were you?

For more information on the drugs campaign, call Steve 0171 737 0100 or Shane 0181 671 5996.

Grass is Green

by Peter Barnett

Cannabis hemp is the most remarkable plant on earth. No other provides such a diverse and powerful ranges of uses so beneficial to humankind. It is, quite simply, the world's most valuable and versatile resource.

Some amazing facts:

- * It produces a higher yield of wood pulp per acre than the fastest growing conifers, with no acidic damage to river-lakes. It does not require harmful chemicals during processing, or pesticides/herbicides during cultivation.
- * It produces the strongest, most durable fibres known to humanity, used to make twine, rope, fabrics and fine quality paper.
- * It provides one of the highest yields of biomass in the plant kingdom, which can be converted into solid, liquid and gaseous fuels.
- * The inner stalks are high in cellulose and silica and have numerous industrial applications including for building materials, paper, plastics and paint.
- * Its rapidly penetrating roots aerate and bind the soil, preventing erosion and improving soil texture.
- * Its seeds are high in protein and contain the highest level of essential fatty acids in the plant kingdom (25% LNA & 55% LA) making it an ideal food source. It is even claimed the nature and balance of these fatty acids are such that consumption not only keep you healthy but also slim.
- * The seeds can be pressed into edible oil, also suitable for paints and lubricants.
- * The by-product of pressing, seedcake, can be used for animal feed or ground into flour.
- * It has proven medical properties and minimal if any toxic side effects. It is especially beneficial to sufferers of multiple sclerosis, glaucoma and migraine.
- * It is non-addictive, cannot be injected, and has been used for religious, cultural and recreation purposes for thousands of years. It is one of the safest drugs in existence.
- * In the US tobacco costs 425,000 lives a year, alcohol about 150,000. There is not a single case of documented death due to cannabis.

It gets you stoned.

Why has most of humankind been deprived of this miracle plant for the last 50 years?

It has the 3 main criteria to be designated a wonder drug - versatility, cheapness and low toxicity. If it was used to replace drugs in the areas where its efficacy is proven, that alone would deprive drug companies of billions of pounds. Its full medicinal potential is unknown as research has been vigorously suppressed by the vested interests.

The prohibition of hemp is one of the most appalling scandals of all time, but the least known because the massive vested interests have invested a fortune in demonising it as the most evil plant on Earth. For amazing examples of this see "Reefer Madness" reviewed on page 21.

A plant which provides food, energy, shelter, clothing, and if permitted, could alleviate the suffering of millions of people afflicted with chronic illness, has been banned because it threatens the profits from oil, drugs, timber, to name a few. It's easy to grow, unpatentable, and could help save tropical rainforests and reverse the greenhouse effect. It would probably make you a cup of tea if you sated it nicely.

Clearly this plant is (seriously) a threat to the status quo.

Let's legalise as soon as possible!

Further information: Cannabis Hemp Information Club (CHIC) BM Box 6339, London WC1N 3XX

* Rubber balloons rapidly perish, especially in sunlight, and are therefore not hazardous to wildlife

Bypassing the truth

The Newbury Liberal Democrats

by Jenny Jones

It's little wonder that people have become disillusioned and contemptuous of our political system when they regularly witness politicians manipulating the truth for their own ends. Both Labour and the Liberal Democrats have issued some fine transport policies, yet up and down the country there are local councils supporting roads schemes that totally contradict their party's national policies. Why should anyone trust anything they say?

If they supported a scheme in the genuine belief that it was in the best interests of the community, there would be some justification for their stance. But this is rarely the case - usually the motivation is political in nature, and invariably linked to vested interests.

In the case of the Newbury Bypass, the Liberal Democrats chose to support the scheme despite mountains of evidence against it because at the time a majority of local people seemed to support it (not surprisingly having been saturated with pro-bypass propaganda from Government agencies and the local press). In other words, there were more votes in a pro-bypass stand, so never mind the adverse long-term effects on the people of Newbury and their environment.

To make matters worse, however, the Newbury Lib Dems engaged in every dirty trick they could come up with to keep the public misinformed, and smear the anti-bypass campaigners. This came as no surprise to the Green Party, who from a long and bitter experience in elections have learnt that while Labour and the Tories will stoop to all manner of dirty tricks, the Lib Dems have developed it into a fine art.

In a new Report entitled *Bypassing the Truth*, Friends of the Earth relate the Lib Dems' disgraceful involvement in the scheme, highlighting how they systematically ignored their own party policy as well as expert evidence, and sought to demonise and rubbish protesters. The report ends with the following conclusions:

The Liberal Democrats have:

- Greatly misrepresented the so-called 'democratic procedures' of choosing the Newbury bypass, which were heavily weighted towards road-building;



- Claimed that traffic management solutions were considered as alternatives to the bypass, although this is not the case;

- Claimed to have tried other transport measures already in Newbury, but in reality have done almost nothing to control local traffic;

- Refused to accept that alternative transport strategies could solve Newbury's traffic problems against expert evidence;

- Misinterpreted evidence about the likely extent of induced traffic from the Newbury bypass, especially on the existing A34;

- Claimed that the high traffic forecasts justify the need for the bypass, but that traffic levels will not rise again after the bypass is built because the high forecasts do not apply;

- Grossly exaggerated the benefits of the bypass, and refused to take into account the high environmental and economic cost of road construction;

- Refused to accept the changed circumstances relevant to the Newbury bypass, and which led them to oppose the East London River Crossing;

- Misled the public about the extent of environmental damage, without acknowledging the lack of a proper environmental impact assessment for the

bypass route;

- Used the results of misleading telephone 'call-in' lines to claim 'local support' for the bypass;

- Consistently attacked and attempted to discredit bypass opponents rather than debate the real issues.

Ecofascists!

The report is highly embarrassing for the Lib Dems, contains numerous quotations and references exposing their hypocrisy and dishonesty.

Liberal Democrat claims to be 'green' are now met with a hollow laugh from the environmental movement. There is bitter resentment from protesters, who have been called 'ecofascists' and 'ecoterrorists' by Liberal Democrats. It is an episode they will never be able to live down, particularly when, in a few years time, the people of Newbury will see for themselves what a pack of lies they have been fed as the town reels from over-development and even worse congestion than exists today.

12 page booklet *'Bypassing the Truth: The Liberal Democrats and the Newbury Bypass'* (12 pages, 73 references) available for £1 from Foe, 56-58 Alma Street, Luton LU2 2PH.

Jenny Jones is Chair of the Executive Committee of the Green Party.

Proportional Representation explained

by Mike Boulton

The Green Party advocates Proportional Representation, but how many members have any understanding of the various voting systems? Which are proportional and to what degree?

Many people are put off by the belief that PR is complicated. It can be confusing because several systems are known by more than one name. Also each country uses its own variation of a chosen system. Opponents of PR capitalise on this confusion, and always cite countries whose PR system has proved less than successful.

I shall cover the main systems with their synonyms and their various strengths and weaknesses from the Green Party perspective.

Simple Plurality (SP)

- also called **First Past the Post (FPP)**. This is the system in mainland Britain and is definitively *not* proportional.

The main problem is that the result is heavily loaded in favour of the two largest parties. We should be aware that in the event of a referendum, SP could be included in an attempt to confuse the public into voting for no change.

Limited Vote (LV)

Non-proportional. Multi-member constituencies are used, each voter has one vote. LV can offer benefits to smaller parties who can choose to stand only one candidate against larger parties' full slates. Thus they may benefit from the larger pool of voters.

Alternative Vote (AV)

Non-proportional. This is the system most favoured by Labour. AV is probably the worst system for the Green Party. Single member constituencies are used; each voter has two votes. Preferred candidates are indicated by writing 1 or 2 by their names. The lowest polling candidate's first preference votes are binned and the second preferences counted. Then the next lowest and so on until one candidate passes 50%.

In the event of a referendum AV might be supported by the larger parties as it would tend to falsely legitimise them at the expense of smaller parties. AV would almost certainly mean an end to the Green Party in national elections.

Second Ballot (SB)

Non-proportional. This is a variant of AV. If after the first ballot no candidate polls 50%, low polling candidates are eliminated and the election re-run. This system is costly to administer and is mainly used for presidential elections, notably in France and Russia.

Additional Member System (AMS)

- or **Multi Member System (MMS)**

AMS is favoured by the Green Party for Parliamentary elections. Designed to be truly proportional, it uses large, single-member constituencies. Each voter has two votes, one for a candidate and the second for the party. The vote is generally slightly

The Green Party advocates AMS for national elections, the system under which Germany's Greens (Die Grünen) have enjoyed so much success.

skewed by imposing a party threshold, typically 5%, below which no candidate is elected.

This system could give more power to the voter than any other if the ballot paper offered the right choices, e.g. male/female and ethnicity boxes.

AMS is certainly the only voting system that can allow the voter to cast a vote for a party that is not putting up a candidate in that voter's constituency e.g. SNP in Dover or Plaid Cymru in York. This would mean that every Green vote would be used to elect a Green MP.

Single Transferable Vote (STV)

- favoured by the Green Party for local elections and by the Lib Dems and Electoral Reform Society for all elections.

This is a rather complicated system. Multi-member constituencies, typically returning 3 to 6 members. The names for all candidates for the constituency are listed on the ballot paper and the voter chooses

in order of preference by numbering the candidates 1,2,3 and so on. A formula is used to calculate the number of first preference votes a candidate needs to be elected. Then second and third preference votes are used, again using a formula, to select the remaining members.

STV achieves partial proportionality and is the only system able to easily deal with independent candidates. The voter has the opportunity to select by age, sex, party or other characteristic within the limits of candidates listed.

In national elections a party would need to win at least 15% of the vote to reap the benefits of STV, which is why the Lib Dems are so keen on it.

Party List (PL)

Theoretically the most proportional system but puts power in the hands of the parties rather than the voter. Each party's candidates are listed in order of the party's preference. The electorate vote for the party of their choice and enough candidates are taken from each party's list to meet that party's quota.

Conclusion

These are the main systems. There are others, and are variants of all of them. For example under AMS the party's list of candidates may be compiled by the party or could be that party's highest polling unelected candidates. The former option favours party hacks whilst the latter option ensures that all candidates face the electorate.

During Channel 4's 'Improving Democracy' series Edward de Bono delivered some innovative new ideas for representation and debate in Parliament, including a system of 'fractional voting'. An MP polling 60% of the vote gets 0.6% of a vote in the House of Commons. This, and other ideas formed the basis of a radical re-think which could offer an opportunity to develop completely new policy on electoral reform and democracy.

I hope this is a helpful aid to understand the systems. A fuller treatment is available in *World Political Systems* by Derbyshire & Derbyshire, published by Chambers.

Mike Boulton is a member of Green Party Regional Council, representing Sevenside Area Green Party

Labour fury at Green DIY activity

by Peter Barnett

Unlikely graffiti on railway bridges in Witham, Essex had long since been the cause of complaint from local residents. Instead of removing it, the Labour dominated Council saw this as a political opportunity to attack Railtrack. Amid a blaze of publicity they called upon the privatised utility to clean up 'their' graffiti, as if the company was entirely culpable. So when the local Green Party stepped in and did the job, one might have expected the Council to be a little irritated. *But not to go ballistic!*

At first the Council sulked and refused to comment, although the Labour Mayor said it was very worthy. The local papers loved it, having been campaigning to get the graffiti removed, and gave the Witham & Braintree Green Party wonderful coverage. Their Press Officer James Abbott explained that it was just one of a series of green DIY community actions that had included litter picking, tree planting, can collecting. *"We are telling people that they don't need to wait for the authorities, just do it".*

Meanwhile, back at the Town Hall, fuming Labour Councillors could contain their rage no longer, and bitterly condemned the Greens for this unspeakable act of community goodwill. In the weeks that followed, the local press gave acres of coverage to the matter as the Labour Councillors made complete fools of themselves. These are just a few of many examples of their comments:

"The Greens are vigilantes" (Four local companies sponsored the Green Party with money or materials whilst members of the

public tossed cash donations into a bucket on site.)

"It's not up to Town Councillors to clean up graffiti, or to help old ladies across the road." (This led to an editorial in a local paper which said *"If you want to get across the road, ask the Green Party"*)

"Thankfully little damage has been done by these well-meaning amateurs." (In fact the environmentally conscious Greens, refusing to use chemicals, spent 10 hard hours physically scrubbing off the eyesores with wire brushes, and followed up by sealing the concrete.)

And the absolute classic... *"What do the Greens mean by empowerment?"*

The papers' letter columns were crammed with the affair. One ran a phone poll asking whether the Green Party were genuine or just publicity seekers. The only people to criticise the Greens were outraged Labour Councillors. Support for the local Green Party has never been stronger. *"If only there was a by-election pending"* sighed James Abbott.

Whilst the affair has been source of mirth and enjoyment for the local Greens, and enhanced their standing, it paints a very sad picture of the local Labour Party. Their obsession for party political gain at the expense of those they represent is a reflection of how all the grey parties think and practise politics. Please may Green Politics prosper and grow.

An exhibition of the press coverage will be on display at the Green Party Autumn Conference in Havings.

Chainstore rip-off

Local shopping makes money sense

by Emily McIvor

Everyone knows that supermarkets have the keenest prices don't they? ... well maybe for baked beans or milk or sugar, but how do they compare for the other things that we buy? Things we commonly use and tend to pick them without checking the price. We have had a sneaky suspicion that lots of things that you don't notice are actually more expensive in chain retailers than in small, locally owned retail outlets. To test this theory we put together a basket of some of these other items and checked out prices in Tiverton during June. The results are in the table below.

Prices are for as near as possible equivalent quality and brand. Prices for the closest size match are adjusted to take account of any weight/volume differences.

*Key: * better product and available loose to refill customer's container so less waste.*

Results

Not only are small traders giving far better value for money on many items, they also keep most of the money in the local economy. Our basket cost £16.30 from chain retailers and £11.59 from local traders, and that included one extra item which we couldn't buy in the supermarket. Our little survey exposes the myth about supermarket prices and shows just how important it is to support small shops. Each one we lose deprives us not only of choice but also value for money.

Emily McIvor is the Green Party PPC for Tiverton and Honiton.

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For more information please contact:

Jo Caine, 3 Railway Cottages,
Lindfield Rd, Ardingly, W Sussex RH17 6SW
Tel: 01444 892762

item	chain retailer	local retailer
60W light bulb	69p	40p (small shop)
generic soluble aspirin	65p/24	36p/25 (small shop)
50 ml shoe polish	79p	58p (small shop)
lead brand toothpaste	80p/50ml	70p/50ml (small shop)
tomatoes 397g tin	23p	23p (small shop)
1lb carrots	39p/lb (ex Portugal)	39p/lb (France/market)
sultanas 500g	95p	77p (wholefood shop)
pudding rice 500g	65p	65p (small shop)
1 lb dry lentils	n/a	47p (wholefood shop)
marmite 125g	£1.05	£1.25 (small shop)
bleach 1 litre	62p	59p (small shop)
salt (plastic bag) 1kg	41p	37p (small shop)
malt vinegar 568ml	54p	52p (small shop)
wash-up liquid low impact	£1.45/litre	£1.38/litre * (wholefood)
evening primrose oil	60x500mg £5.89	180 £6.15 (wholefood shop) - £2.05 for 60
bananas /lb	44p	39p (market)
1 lb NZ cox apples	75p	49p (market)

In fear of biodiversity

by Trevor Lawson

Ecologists have never been particularly good at exciting public opinion. Instead, the authority of science is all that gives them credence. Take "biological diversity", their popular catch-all phrase for today's conservation movement, coined by the American ant specialist, Edward O. Wilson. Biological diversity is a good piece of scientific nomenclature: it has a weight and authority prized by those in the know, but a philosophical density which excludes the average non-scientist and provides endless opportunity for convoluted and largely meaningless debate within the scientific community.

Despite its inaccessibility, the conservation movement is now trying to sell us biodiversity (the shorthand version) in a big way. The Convention on Biological Diversity at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, has led to the UK Biodiversity Steering Group's report on what should be preserved, how so and why. All the big conservation bodies are signed up to it and the Department of the Environment has welcomed it. The famed Newbury snail is in there, and so is the great crested newt.

For conservationists, the Government's acceptance of such a strategy is a major victory. Yet it has benefited the Newbury snail not one iota - the bypass is still being built and the snail is being moved out of the way. In Peterborough the 30,000 great crested newts relocated to make way for a housing development seem to have mysteriously disappeared.

So the biodiversity proponents appear to have led us up a blind alley, where species are commodified - awarded a quantitative rather than qualitative value - because they are rare or unusual, and not because they matter to people. The value of biodiversity is then more easily undermined by "the wider public interest", whether it is a new road or another housing development.

Biological diversity is as meaningful a phrase to Joe

Public as traction variations in small gauge railway engines. Perhaps this is why, over the last two decades of the boom and bust economy, conservationists have completely failed to reverse the decline of wildlife in the face of the onslaught from developers and agronomists. Everyday butterflies, birds and flowers have simply ceased to be everyday. Conservationists, preoccupied with navel gazing on nature reserves, have allowed common species to become rare.

Now, as the conservation agencies start waking up to the disaster, you can see these Leviathans struggling to reposition themselves and find new supporters. This is achieved through simple marketing tricks. The obscure or unattractive are simply not mentioned. Instead, the furry friends in the Biodiversity Steering group report are flagged up. Otters, dormice, red squirrels, skylarks and the like take precedence over a hoverfly, Callicera

spinolae, or river jelly lichen, Collema dichotomum.

The supporters of conservation organisations have one thing in common - a passion for wildlife - and such marketing strategies conceal from them the truly lifeless peddling of ecology. Conservation agencies, behind the scenes, are still stuffed to the gills with men (mostly) who convert public passion into a deathly taxonomic list. Somehow, ecology reshapes every aesthetic appreciation of nature into an inert block of measurements which can be modified and managed. Wildlife is tamed and mortified, and is certainly not liberated.

The implications for the green movement are significant. In the late 1980s and into the 1990s, conservationists have been lumped in with greens as though their outlooks and objectives were similar. I know too many "greens" who fail to discriminate over the philosophical

differences between themselves and their conservation "allies". Instead, with hesitation, they too claim that biological diversity is a worthy objective for the wider environment movement. I beg to differ.

The current obsession with biological diversity threatens to turn nature into a documented resource to be managed on financial balance sheets. My concern is not new and has been voiced elsewhere in times past. But greens risk being undermined by conservationists who will ally themselves with politicians and industries keen to commodify and manipulate nature. If biological diversity becomes a mainstream catchphrase, blindly absorbed as a result of repetition rather than reasoning, then wildlife and its inherent spirit will be sidelined.

It is not the fault of ecologists. As scientists they simply make the mistake of believing that their data is an ethic. But it is incumbent on us all to save ecology from itself. Conservation, through the machinery of ecology is merely a process. We need to pay a little more attention to the product that we seek.

Trevor Lawson is a freelance journalist

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Letters

Sustrans - wrong routes?

Much as I can understand why so many people are getting excited at the prospect of a national cycle route network, I find the detail of the Sustrans scheme very disappointing and largely irrelevant.

We need good cycle routes for 3 purposes: getting to work; shopping and for recreation. The Sustrans network links major towns (e.g. Oxford with Milton Keynes and Reading) and it is self-evident that very few people will want to make such journeys even if they are enabled to do so safely. All major towns are surrounded by towns and villages from which people commute up to 5 miles for shopping and work purposes. These are the daily journeys that could be done on a bike, given decent road tracks properly maintained, yet Sustrans does nothing to make these trips possible.

When it comes to recreation, we need cycle routes radiating from major towns and urban areas (not just linking them) and leading into rural and 'holiday' areas. They would also connect with railheads. At present people wishing to enjoy the countryside on a bike compete dangerously for space on country roads with motor vehicles. The idea that cycling becomes pleasant and safe once you're out of the town is just daft.

Sorry, Sustrans. Your project maybe a spectacular civil engineering feat, but it will do little or nothing to reduce motor traffic or get people onto bikes, until you abandon your hang-up with linking cities and go where people can (and want to) realistically cycle. What a waste of lottery and millennium money.

Jon Carpenter, Finstock, Oxon

Green education

I was pleased to read of Green Party gains in Oxford County and City Councils, but dismayed by the elitist tone of your coverage (Green World #14).

Your report correlates Oxfordshire with a 'well educated... electorate'. Maybe people living in the area of Oxford University are high-scorers academically, yet does that mean they are necessarily 'better educated' than the general population? Now a multi-cultural society with increased social polarisation, Britain has traditionally been governed and ruled by a hegemony of Oxbridge graduates - 'the brightest and best' - and where has it got us?

In summary, aren't elitism and concomitant centralisation the fodder of

increasing alienation, unemployment and social unrest? What does the Green Party have to offer in terms of an education policy for a more inclusive society in which the most popular newspapers are not for 'the people who don't give a toss about who runs the country as long as she's got big tits'? (Ex-Oxford graduate Tony Blair describes The People as 'essential reading for millions'!).

P.S. I regard the social diversity integral to the hidden curriculum of my current University of Westminster education as invaluable - a social education. By contrast, my St Hilda's, Oxford undergraduate girlfriend of the mid-1970s complained 'The standard, competitive breakfast conversation of my peers is generally headed - What Daddy does for a living'.

Alan Wheatley, London

I agree with all of the above. When I described the Oxford electorate as highly enlightened and well-educated, I was not referring to their academic education, but to their understanding of Green politics. The point I was trying to make was that after years of exposure to Green Party literature, regularly delivered by the Oxford Greens, the voters in Oxford City Centre have a greater than average awareness of the issues, and as a result have begun to elect Green councillors. I apologise for not making this clearer.

Editor

Population neglect

While I am in agreement with most GP policies and views expressed in Green World I feel that we are dodging one crucial issue. That is the issue of population.

Many of the problems we see as green issues such as factory farming, the use of chemicals in agriculture and the over exploitation of natural resources are also the consequence of population growth. This is clearly a worldwide problem and one which is largely ignored by political parties and economists who only look to the short term. Isn't it time that the Green Party gave this issue greater emphasis?

David Barlow, Deal, Kent

We shall be doing exactly that next issue. To be fair, the Green Party is alone in having a detailed and excellent policy on population, although you are right to suggest that we have given the issue little attention recently.

Editor

That's fighting talk

Thank you for your letter of support and for Green World which is a pleasure to read! To get letters like yours and to know that other people are continuing the campaign against the Hawk

deal is partly what keeps one going in here. Quite apart from that it is important in itself that the campaign, and all sister and brother campaigns, continue.

May I raise one issue from the article in GW about our action? In the first part of it, you write that we were 'avenging angels' and 'armed with eye witness accounts... (and hammers!)'. Hammers are tools, for carpentry, for blacksmiths' work, for disarmament and other such things and we were certainly not using them as weapons, as 'armed with' suggests. And I cannot imagine being armed with eye witness accounts! 'Avenging': we were rather more nervous and deeply concerned about the results of the Hawks arriving in Indonesia. I feel these expressions are borrowed from the military and other violent groups who have a diametrically different way of changing things. I feel this is more than hair splitting over writing style. Non-violence, which is what we are practising, is a powerful yet vulnerable dynamic, which we need to take care of and be absolutely clear about.

We are very inspired by the green movement. Friends send us tales and photos of Newbury, The Land is Ours, land occupations and other exciting, hope-raising, changing events.

The Big Green Gathering is at the same time as our trial starting July 22 in Liverpool Crown Court. With another East Timor action in Australia, and a Women's Peace Camp outside Bofors weapons factory in Karlskoga, Sweden. (Bofors recently exported three naval carriers to Indonesia), it is all coming together very gracefully as it is all connected.

What can you do to support?

- Keep the issues on the agenda in your media - the arms trade, East Timor and Ploughshares issues. (There are a lot of environmental issues in East Timor, consequences of the occupation, eg deforestation and environmental activists are persecuted. Yet another terrible link between war, injustice and environmental destruction.

- Organise NVDA at BAE sites and at parliament. Contact the support group for ideas (Ricarda/Rowan 0171 923 9511).

- Last, but not least, the support group finances are very strained and donations very welcome (cheques payable to "East Timor Ploughshares", please). Box S, 55 Queen Margaret's Grove, London N1 4PZ

Again, thanks for your support - 'full support of the Green Party' - that is quite something and is very much appreciated.

Lotta Kronlid, HMP Risley

Reviews

LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Planning and People in a Sustainable Countryside

by Simon Fairlie

p/b 160 pp £10 inc p&p
Jon Carpenter Publishing, The Spendlove Centre, Charlbury, Oxon OX7 3PQ

Simon Fairlie, former editor of *The Ecologist* and member of the Tinker's Bubble Trust prepared this report and guide in association with The Land is Ours Trust. It examines Britain's planning system from the bottom up - from the point of view of the planned rather than the planner.

The report argues that sustainable development in the countryside requires affordable accommodation and sustainable rural livelihoods. By giving people the opportunity to live in the countryside in ways that improve the environment the planning system could reinvestigate the rural economy.

There is harsh criticism for the Council for the Protection of Rural England, accused of collusion with the development industry that is turning the countryside into a "cross between a factory and a drive in museum". It argues that the CPRE and other members of the countryside protection lobby:

- * are fighting a 'phony war' with the development industry which is carving Britain into two: an urban zone where almost any kind of development is permitted, and a rural zone where nobody but large-scale farmers are allowed to do anything.
- * are lending support to new planning measures which will crack down on small and newly established farmers, but leave large-scale farmers free to do what they want.
- * are blindly opposed to development in the countryside and so leave no room for sustainable development

The report is designed to act as a guide, both for people who want to put forward a low impact planning application, and for planners who have to respond to these applications.

It includes a number of policy recommendations, illustrations, explanatory appendices, full references and a thorough index.

Penny Kemp

DIGITATIONS

A battery of mind-blowing number crunchings from the cutting edge of eco-paranoia

by Roland Morgan

p/b 192 pp £4.99 inc p&p
Michael O'Mara Books Ltd., 9 Lion Yard, Tremadoc Road, London SW4 7NQ

Guardian readers will be familiar with Roland Morgan's Digitations column, a weekly collection of startling facts and fascinating statistics on social and ecological issues which make a telling commentary on the way we live and think today. This book is a compilation of not-so-trivial information, split into sections covering various critical issues. Some of the material is entertaining, much of it shocking, and it's an excellent resource for newsletter editors needing a punchy statistic to fill that awkward space. Illustrated throughout, here's a few examples...

Britons consume nearly 4,000 Olympic swimming pools worth of dissolved sugar in soft drinks every year.

Coal-fired power stations are wasting two thirds of their energy. The average number of low-flying warplane sorties over Britain in peacetime is 436, or one every three minutes

A typical ejaculation of human semen contains five calories of nutrition.

Of no interest to vegans that last one.

A MOMENT ON THE EARTH

The Coming Age of Environmental Optimism

by Gregg Easterbrook

p/b 745 pp £9.99 inc p&p
Penguin Books

This very substantial volume was clearly a mammoth undertaking - 745 pages, comprehensively referenced and indexed - what a shame that it's full of crap. Easterbrook is an American contrarian - one of those lousesome people who play down or deny that there are serious environmental problems facing us. We have our own in Britain - the likes of Mat Ridley, Richard North, etc.

These people make a very good living out of debunking environmentalists - the media constantly wheel them in to spout off their garbage in order to create

controversy, irritate greens, or more in more sinister cases, to dampen genuine fears for the benefit of vested interests whose profits are threatened by the issue under scrutiny. They are invariably right-wing, and usually in the pay of environmentally destructive multinationals.

I despise them even more than the polluters themselves, because they are too well informed not to know that what they are saying is wrong. It's not simply the fact they make a living out of deception, but the disinformation they spread is enormously damaging. It sometimes takes years of hard work campaigning on an issue before people start to accept it, and take appropriate action so that they are no longer 'part of the problem'. It only takes a single exposure to an articulate contrarian to destroy all that work.

People are slow and reluctant to accept the truth about, say, the scary implications of global warming and don't readily adjust their lifestyles to be more environmentally responsible. They are very quick, however, to accept the contrarians' stories. It's not surprising - they're being told what they want to hear - "there's no problem really and nothing to worry about". Suddenly it's ok again to drive your gas-guzzling car again because the man on TV said the air's getting cleaner, that global warming is a hoax, and recycling is a waste of time. I see the contrarians as sacrificing our future for a few bucks. I cannot imagine how they can live with themselves.

Getting back to Gregg Easterbrook - he seems even more dangerous, because his book appears much more credible than the short, shallow rubbish that usually comes from contrarians. It has been used extensively by politicians in the US to eliminate environmental protection legislation, or oppose the introduction of new ones.

The basic theme of the book is that the environment is not in peril, but in safe hands. Most environmental problems (from pollution to acid rain to toxic waste) are not severe, and are subject to correction quickly and cheaply. Runaway global warming will be avoided. The environment is getting cleaner. The "handful" of species gone extinct is of little consequence. And so on.

The book is actually an impressive collection of eco-bunking arguments which campaigners could find useful to read so they can be more prepared should they encounter them.

But it's very painful reading.

Peter Barnett

Resources

SQUALL

Squall is a bit like Green World in that it covers the same range of issues and it's quarterly. The difference is that it's about 10 times better, but then with 68 A3 pages they can cover many more subjects and in much greater depth. The quality of the writing is exceptionally good - the articles are well researched and very informative. Squall is, quite simply, indispensable reading.

Year subscription £10 or single issue £2.20 (p&p included)
Squall, PO Box 9859, London N19 5HW

DELTA

12 page newsletter about the abhorrent activities of Shell in Nigeria and the struggle of the Ogoni people. Includes news, background, networking and events. Very informative and worthy of support. For a copy, send donation to *Delta, Box 2, 13 Biddulph St, Leicester LE2 1BH*

ANIMALS CONTACTS DIRECTORY

Simply the most comprehensive and topical database of organisations concerned with animal rights and welfare, including traders, shops and sanctuaries. 1996/7 edition contain over 5000 contacts, also available on disk. Monthly update subscription service.

£4 from Veggie, 180 Mansfield Road, Manchester M1 3HW

REEFER MADNESS

Strips, articles and illustrations from the vicious anti-dope campaigns in the US during the 40s and 50s. Very funny, very disturbing. £1 from *Trevor Hughes, Zephyr, PO Box 6, Wallasey, Liscard L45 4SJ*

SchNEWS

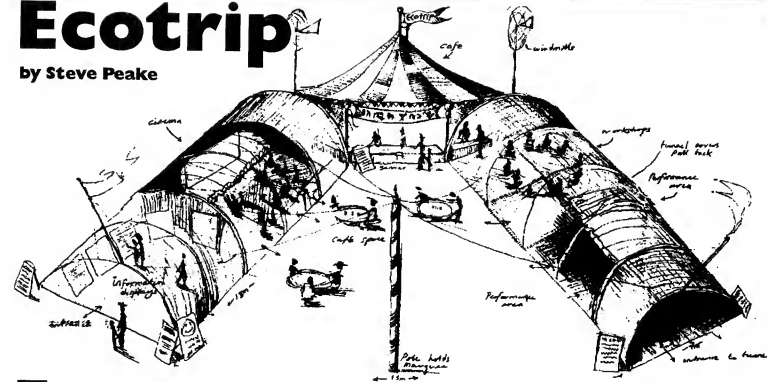
Weekly information sheet covering direct actions going on up and down the country. Well written and highly informative. Send 1st class stamps (eg 20 for next 20 copies) or donations payable to Justice? to: *SchNEWS, c/o On the Fiddle, PO Box 2600, Brighton, Sussex BN2 2DX*

Earth First! Action Update

Monthly newsletter with details of latest direct action, general green news, etc. 1 year sub is £5 for the impoverished, but more if you *Earth First! Action Update, PO Box 9656 London M4 4JY*

Ecotrip

by Steve Peake



It was very early on the Friday morning of Glastonbury 1995, and we were walking up the hill to the south of the site, getting ready to jump the fence. I'd spent the last nine months trying to get a job I enjoyed, having left university dreading the idea of a routine, mundane nine-to-five office job, but not having been able or willing to say the right things and be the right way to get the jobs I wanted. Coming over the brow of the hill, we saw Glastonbury laid out in front of us, all the camp fires and lights calling out like beacons. I paused to take it all in, and then headed down to begin a new life.

It all began as a dream. Looking for something productive and fulfilling to do, at the same time as having as much fun as possible, we hit on the idea of a travelling roadshow touring the festivals, nightclubs and universities promoting the kind of lifestyle we wanted to be living in places where we knew people would be sympathetic. Much of the energy for the project comes from our frustration with established institutions and lifestyles and the growth in direct action, do-it-yourself politics underpinning the protest and Green movement today.

Alternative work ethic

Established at the Green Party Conference in Southport in September 1995, Ecotrip has grown steadily, providing a space where a broad cross section of people come together to work. It's a working example of an alternative work ethic, putting fulfilment and happiness before material gain. Ecotrip provides some expenses - free entry into festivals and clubs, transport and

a place to crash if need be, with any money raised invested back into the organisation to buy equipment for use in Ecotrip by the EcoPeople.

Artistic space

Within Ecotrip, the artistic space is looking to communicate about life and how we live it in imaginative, creative ways, at the same time as highlighting the importance of non-material, spiritual sources of human fulfilment. It is currently hosting Kakatsitsi, a group of traditional African drummers from Ghana, Heathens All, an eco-pagan folk group well popular on the protest-festi scene, the Green Dream Players - interactive street theatre performers as well as a number of poets, painters, photographers, filmmakers and any other artists who need a space to perform.

Workshop/advice space

The workshop/information/advice space hosts workshops, discussions and stalls providing information on all the Green/protest issues. Promoting the principles of the United Nations Local Agenda 21 and Do-It-Yourself Culture, it aims to empower people by giving them the skills and awareness they need to regenerate their local communities and therefore rediscover a sense of meaning and purpose in life. At the Big Green Gathering for example, held on the Wiltshire Downs in July, we hosted over thirty workshops with a combined crew of 97 people.

Well-being area

The Well-Being Area aims to promote

alternative conceptions of health and happiness, teaching and demonstrating alternative techniques such as Shiatsu, Reiki, Massage, and Reflexology as well as relaxation and health/stress awareness therapies.

Kids area

Games and workshops reconnecting children with nature through dance, theatre, story-telling, mime, seed planting, mask-making, song, drumming and non-competitive games all take place in the kids area, allowing their parents to relax in the rest of Ecotrip.

Summer tour

The summer tour has been a huge success - we've become regular stall holders at the Fridge in Brixton (probably the best trance club in Britain), where Kakatsitsi have played to rave reviews; at the Reclaim the Streets Festival of Resistance, and have taken the Ecotrip DIY Cultural Caravan to a number of festivals, whether large ones such as Harvest Fair, the Big Chill, Big Green Gathering, Brighton Festi of Freedom, and Crawley International or smaller, local community fairs in London such as the Southwark Green Day, the Camden Green Fair or the Merton Arts Festival.

University tour

Looking ahead, we're off on a tour of the universities from October to March. Next summer it's back to the fests, with possible tours of Ghana and Europe on the drawing board.

Ecotrip is an example of how positive thinking can breed success. Rather than

Ecotrip (continued)

us, we've taken matters in to our own hands. Looking to build a better society by making changes in our own lives and inviting others to join us. It's an organic, grassroots project, showing how things can be, rather than preaching how things should be, and letting people make up their own minds.

You can help

There are many ways you can help. We're always keen to welcome new people offering skills or equipment, venues (particularly university student unions for the forthcoming uni-tour) or donations for our thirsty coffers. Any inquiries should be addressed to:

Ecotrip, The Jan Rebane Centre,
Brixton, London SW9 0BL
Tel 0171 737 0100

The Green Party and Ecotrip at the Big Green Gathering

The Big Green Gathering is the best outdoor event of the year. It features all the best aspects of the Glastonbury Green Fields, but without the crowds, commercialism or garbage (real Greens don't litter).

This year the Green Party had a large, 3 section marquee (2 sections given to us by FoE and Greenpeace), and featured talks, gatherings, Green Trade and refreshments (thanks to Felicity Mawson, Lou Betts and Peter Barnett). It was, however, totally outclassed by the phenomenally successful Ecotrip. Indeed, the most frequent enquiry at the Green Party marquee was "Where is Ecotrip?"

Ecotrip became the focal point of the entire event. It was packed with people day and night, and hosted a huge selection of events - music, talks, forums, workshops, healing, an entire programme for kids, Tai Chi each morning, and a roaring trade in veggieburgers and beverages.

There was an atmosphere and buzz which attracted people like bees to a honey pot. Even Green Party Speaker David Taylor's session on the fairly dry subject of PR was packed full of a mostly young and attentive audience. It's the most exciting thing to come out of the Green Party for years.

Ecotrip is the Green Party's mobile DIY cultural and environmental space. For more information see above.

The Green Fine Fund

by Shane Collins

The success of recent non-violent direct actions is self-evident. Live export companies going bust, government policy towards road-building changing, Shell consulting greens over the future of Brent Spar, and so on. We are getting results and causing changes.

Another measure of our success, however, is the response of the authorities towards the protesters. By causing disruption and severe economic problems for environment destroying companies, we are earning the attention of M15 and Special Branch, whilst the police and courts are under pressure to crackdown harder on green activists.

One manifestation of our success was the Criminal Justice Act. So far at Newbury there have been around 800 arrests with round two now under way. Arrests mean fines, especially if people plead not guilty, thereby risking a larger fine but importantly clog up the Courts, (some cases at Newbury are taking 8 months to come to court). Fines of £300 or so are hard enough for someone on the dole, and virtually impossible for those who choose not to take the dole.

The next measure designed to curb the protesters kicks off in October - the Jobseeker's Allowance. This will serve to deny benefits to anyone 'not actively seeking work'. Needless to say the 'spotthedifferencelabourtory' thinking does not believe that actively defending the environment is work.

If someone is given a large fine they have 4 options:

1. pay it, usually by instalments;
2. won't/can't pay and go to prison;
3. go underground;
4. give up.

None of these are very attractive, especially to new people thinking of getting involved. We need them. There is a limit to how many times you want to see your home and the land you have been living on being trashed. It can do your head in. If the action is to continue a constant influx of new people is vital.

The authorities know this, which is why they keep changing the rules to make it increasingly difficult. We also need to change the rules; and find ways to provide more support for the 'frontline troops'. This is not a new idea; it has been talked about a great deal. It's time we did something.

We plan to start by setting up a *Green Fine Fund*. The idea is to get regular direct debit donations (although one-off sums will also be gratefully received of course) from supporters and sympathisers who are unable or unwilling to join the action on the ground (or in the trees!).

The fund would be used to help impoverished green activists to pay fines incurred from nvda. The concept has been approved by the Green Party Committee of 100 (G100). We now need feedback and volunteers to help devise procedures for administering, publicising and running the scheme. There will be further meetings at the Autumn Green Party Conference in Hastings, or write to:

**Green Fine Fund, c/o Green Party Office,
1a Waterlow Rd, London N19 5NJ**

Campaigns update

Job Seekers Allowance

The JSA commences in October, and promises to make life very miserable for a large number of people in the short term and almost everybody in the long run. Increased discretionary powers for Employment Service staff and a more severe definition of 'job seeking' are expected to strip 70,000 people of their benefits in the first year alone, with another 180,000 having their benefits reduced. It will increase poverty, crime and the NHS bill, force wages down and lead to a deterioration in work conditions by forcing people to take any job, whatever the pay, conditions or ethical concerns. Support the Employment Service strikers, write to your PPCs, distribute leaflets, tell people!

A new A5 leaflet is available from Green Trade, 43 Green Street, Hereford HR1 2QH.

Road Traffic Reduction Bill

Following a successful year of campaigning by local Green Parties and FoE groups, most recently with the national day of action, *Tame the Traffic: Bring a breath of fresh air to our town*, coupled with the Speakers' Tour in the Spring, the Bill has received widespread publicity and attracted massive support including 165 MPs and 80 local authorities.

The Private Members Ballot (through which we hope to get the Bill introduced to parliament) is coming up in Oct/Nov. We now need you all to dramatically step up the lobbying of your MPs, to support the Bill by signing Early Day Motion No. 21 if they haven't already, and to consider adopting the Bill if they win the Private Members Ballot. This is vital and urgent.

Full details on a campaign update pack from Ron Bailey, 26-28 Underwood Street, London N1 7JQ 0171 490 1555

Green Conference Hastings

White Rock Theatre

18-22nd SEPTEMBER 1996

Everyone is invited to the Green Party Conference, not just members. With over 100 events including workshops, fringe meetings, panel discussions, debates, speeches, entertainment, healing, training, videos... there is always plenty to do, or just relax with friends in one of the bars, lounges or cafeterias and plot your next direct action!



"Come along to our conference and discover that Green Politics is not only empowering but fun!"

Miriam Kennet (conference organiser)



Green Party

New feature: Wednesday roundtable discussions

Job Seekers Allowance

civil liberties

animal rights

anti-roads

nuclear/peace

Criminal Justice Act

Coalition debates

health - food - BSE

Green politics

human rights

development & trade

African night

On the Agenda

Official Green Party business - policy making, strategy development and internal organisational changes take the form of motions submitted by members. They are first discussed in workshops, then debated and voted on by Conference in the main hall.

Subjects on the agenda include

Marine policy: shipping, exploration

LETSsystem and Benefits

Student Grants

Preparing to leave the EU

Gun Control

Third World Debt

Free Public Transport

Genetic Engineering

Minimum Wage

Meet the housing need

Funding of Political Parties

Freemasonry

Additions to Education Policy

Joint Candidates

Celebrating William Morris

Maastricht Referendum

Get rid of the Tories at the General Election

Avoiding a disastrous General Election Result

Built Environment new policy

Philosophical basis



Green Conference Hastings

White Rock Theatre

18-22nd SEPTEMBER 1996

Preparations for the General Election are underway and discussions on election strategy will feature at the conference.

stalls, videos, bands, workshops, debates, panels, meditation

Internal elections

Members will be contesting elections for positions on:
Executive Committee
Constitutional Review Group
Green World Editorial Board
Mediation Committee
Standing Orders Committee
Campaigns Committee
Policy Committee



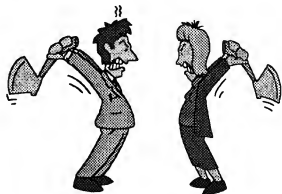
CONFERENCE FEES - Daily rate			
Income guide	Thu/Fri/Sat	Sun	All in
under £5,000	8	3	20
£5K - 9,999	7	4	22
£10K - 14,999	10	8	31
£15K - 19,999	15	11	45
£20K - 29,999	19	15	58
£30K - 39,999	24	18	73
over £40,000	30	23	91

CONFERENCE CO-ORDINATOR

Miriam Kennet, 6 Strachey Close, Tidmarsh, Reading RG8 8EP 01734 845225

Accommodation

20 floor spaces at £2 per night in the Hastings Friends Meeting House. 30 beds £5 night - 1st booked 1st served then 50 mattresses £5 per night in YMCA.



Friendly debates

Healing area

Healers contact Jude 01458 850971

Spiritual space

Contact Dr. Richard Lawson 01934 835140

Stalls

Cheap rates, phone Brenda 01484 533451

art, books, New Age, clothes, wholefoods, crafts, NGOs, pressure groups

BOOKING FORM

Name _____
Address _____
Postcode _____
Tel (home) _____ (work) _____

Days attending and fees payable (see above)

Wednesday doors open 11 am YMCA FMH floor
Thursday £ _____ YMCA FMH floor
Friday £ _____ YMCA FMH floor
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EM & VDU News, PO Box 25, Liphook, Hants GU30 7SE

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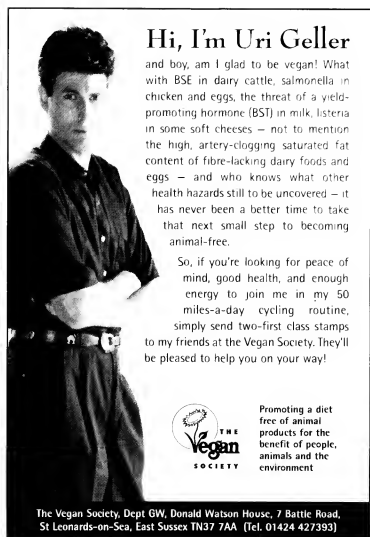
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